

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration



THE RUSSIAN SCENE

Two Shillings and Sixpence Net.

9 Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster, S.W.1.

Vol. LXXI

May 1932

No. 426

Use & Study

TRADE & TECHNICAL JOURNALS

FOR TRADE DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS

FOR FACTS OF PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

FOR THE VERY LATEST NEWS AND INFORMATION

FOR AN INDEX TO GOODS USED & SOLD

If you are seeking new markets, or desire to get first-hand information about a trade or industry you cannot go to a surer or more authoritative source than the trade and technical journals serving it. The address of any paper in this list will be furnished on request.

Amateur Photographer & Cinematographer.	Electrical Trading.	Modern Transport.
Architects' Journal.	Electric Vehicles & Batteries.	Motor.
Architectural Review.	Empire Mail & Overseas Engineer (The).	Motor Cycle & Cycle.
Autocar.	Engineering & Boiler House Review.	Motor Cycling. [Trader.
Automobile Engineer (Incorporating Motor Body Building).	Export Trader.	Motor Trader & Review.
Bakers' & Confectioners' National Association Reviewers' Journal. [view.	Fertiliser, Feeding Stuffs & Farm Supplies Journal.	Motor Transport.
British & South African Export Gazette.	Footwear Organiser.	Off-Licence Journal.
British Baker.	Fruit, Flower & Vegetable Trades' Journal.	Oil & Colour Trades Outfitter. [Journal.
British Engineers' Export Journal.	Furnishing Trades' Organiser.	Overseas Engineer.
British Export Gazette.	Gas Engineer. [ganiser.	Packing, Packaging & Conveying Gazette.
British Journal of Photography.	Grocer & Oil Trade Review.	Paper Box & Bag Maker.
Broadcaster (Weekly).	Grocers' Gazette & Provision Trades' News.	Paper Container.
Bus & Coach.	Grocery & The Provision Merchant.	Paper-Maker & British Paper Trade Journal.
Caterer (The).	Hotel Review (The).	Paper Market.
Chemist & Druggist (The).	Ice & Cold Storage.	Photographic Dealer.
Cigar & Tobacco World.	India-Rubber Journal.	Plumbing Trade Journal.
Commercial Motor.	Ironmonger (The).	Pottery Gazette & Glass Trade Review.
Confectioners' Union & Ice Cream & Soda Fountain Journal.	Journal of Decorative Art.	Power Laundry.
Confectionery Journal.	Kinematograph Weekly.	Rural Electrification & Electro-Farming.
Contractors' Record & Municipal Engineering.	Licensing World.	Specification.
Crushing & Grinding.	Light Car & Cyclecar.	Style for Men.
Dairyman.	Locomotive, Railway Carriage & Wagon Review.	Talking Machine & Wireless Trade News.
Drapers' Organiser.	Machinery.	Textile Manufacturer.
Drapers' Record.	Meat Trades' Journal.	Tobacco Trade Review.
Dyer, Calico Printer, Bleacher, Finisher & Textile Review.	Mechanical World & Engineering Record.	Waste Trade World.
Electrical Industries & Investments.	Men's Wear.	Wine Trade Review.
Electrical Review.	Mining Journal, Railway & Commercial Gazette.	Wireless & Gramophone Export Trader. [Trader.
Electrical Times.	Model Engineer & Practical Electrician.	Wireless & Gramophone Wireless Engineer & Experimental Wireless.
		Wireless World & Radio Review.
		Yachting World & Motor Boating Journal.

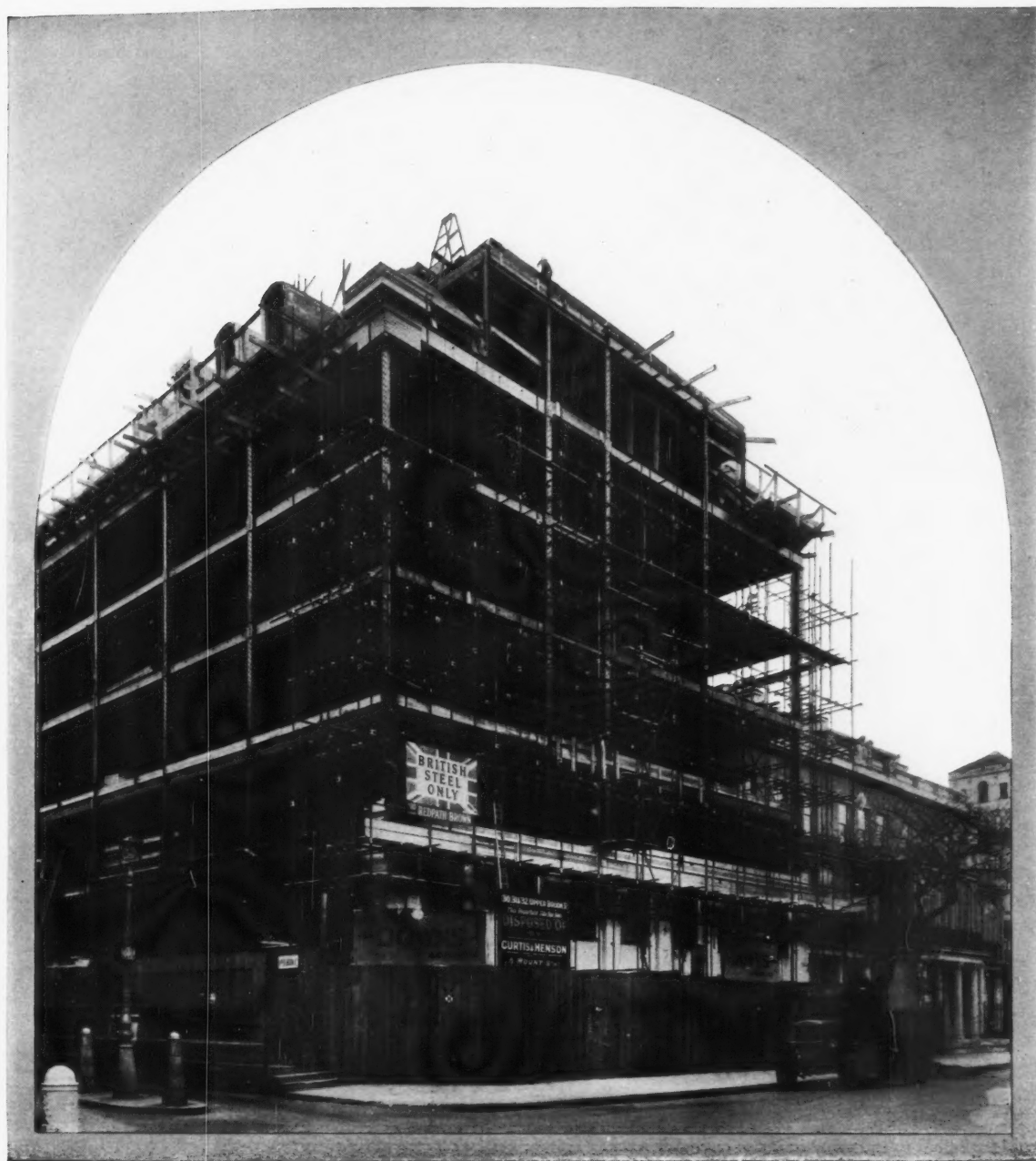
Official Handbook, giving particulars of over 500 papers, post free 1/-.

Periodical, Trade Press & Weekly Newspaper Proprietors' Association, Ltd.,

Telephone: Central 2441. 6, Bouverie Street, E.C. 4. Telegrams: Weneppla, Fleet, London.

100%

ADVERTISING VALUE



COUTTS BANK, 30-32 UPPER BROOK ST., W.

Architects : Wimperis, Simpson & Guthrie

STEELWORK BY
REDPATH BROWN

& CO., LTD., CONSTRUCTIONAL ENGINEERS,
3 DUNCANNON STREET, LONDON, W.C.2

Telephone : Whitehall 8383

Telegrams : "Lesquar Westrand, London."

Established 1802

Incorporated 1896

WORKS AND STOCKYARDS : LONDON, EDINBURGH, MANCHESTER,
GLASGOW. OFFICES : BIRMINGHAM, NEWCASTLE, LIVERPOOL &
SOUTHAMPTON. REGISTERED OFFICE : 2 ST. ANDREW SQUARE, EDINBURGH.



THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration

Vol. LXXI, No. 426

May 1932.

CONTENTS

THE RUSSIAN SCENE

	PAGE
FOREWORD. By The Editor	173
PART I.	
THE FOUNDATIONS. By Robert Byron	174
PART II.	
THE BUILDERS. By Berthold Lubetkin	201

Plates

CATHEDRAL OF ST. SOPHIA AT VELIKI NOVGOROD, 1045. From a drawing by Robert Byron	Plate I	THE RUSSIAN SCENE, 1932: THE PETRO- VOSKY METAL FACTORY AT NIZHNO- DNEPROVSK, UKRAINE	Plate V
THE KREMLIN	Plate II	AN ICE DAM AT MAGNITOGORSK	Plate VI
EXAMPLES OF THE COLOURS USED ON THE BUILDINGS OF LENINGRAD AT THE END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY AND THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH	Plate III	THE LARGEST ELECTRIC STATION IN EUROPE	Plate VII
THE HOUSE OF INDUSTRY AT HARKOV	Plate IV	THE HOUSE OF THE SOVIET AT NOVO SIBIRSK AND AT NIZHNI NOVGOROD, DESIGNED BY GRINBERG	Plate VIII
		THE FIRST SOCIALIST TOWN: AUTOSTROY	Plate IX

MARGINALIA:

Page 215

TRADE AND CRAFT:

AN ARCHITECT VISITS THE IDEAL HOME EXHIBITION. By F. R. S. Yorke. Page 216

Articles, photographs, or drawings sent with a view to publication will be carefully considered, but the Proprietors will not undertake responsibility for loss or damage. All photographs intended for reproduction should, preferably, be printed on albumenized silver paper.

All articles and illustrations should bear the name and address of the sender, and postage should be sent to cover their return.

The Editor disclaims responsibility for statements made or opinions expressed in any article to which the author's name is attached, the responsibility for such statements or opinions resting with the author.

All communications on Editorial matters should be addressed to the Editor, THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, 9 Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster, S.W.1.

Prepaid Subscription Rates

United Kingdom, £1 5 0 per annum, post free. U.S.A., \$8.00 per annum, post free. Holland, Guilders 18 per annum, post free. Italy, Lire 150 per annum, post free. Elsewhere Abroad, £1 5 0 per annum, post free. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to THE ARCHITECTURAL PRESS, LTD., and crossed Westminster Bank, Caxton House Branch.

Subscribers to THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW can have their volumes bound complete with Index, in cloth cases, at a cost of 10s. each, or cases can be supplied separately at 4s. 6d. each.

An Index is issued every six months, covering the months of January to June and July to December, and can be obtained, without charge, on application to the Publishers, 9 Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster, S.W.1.

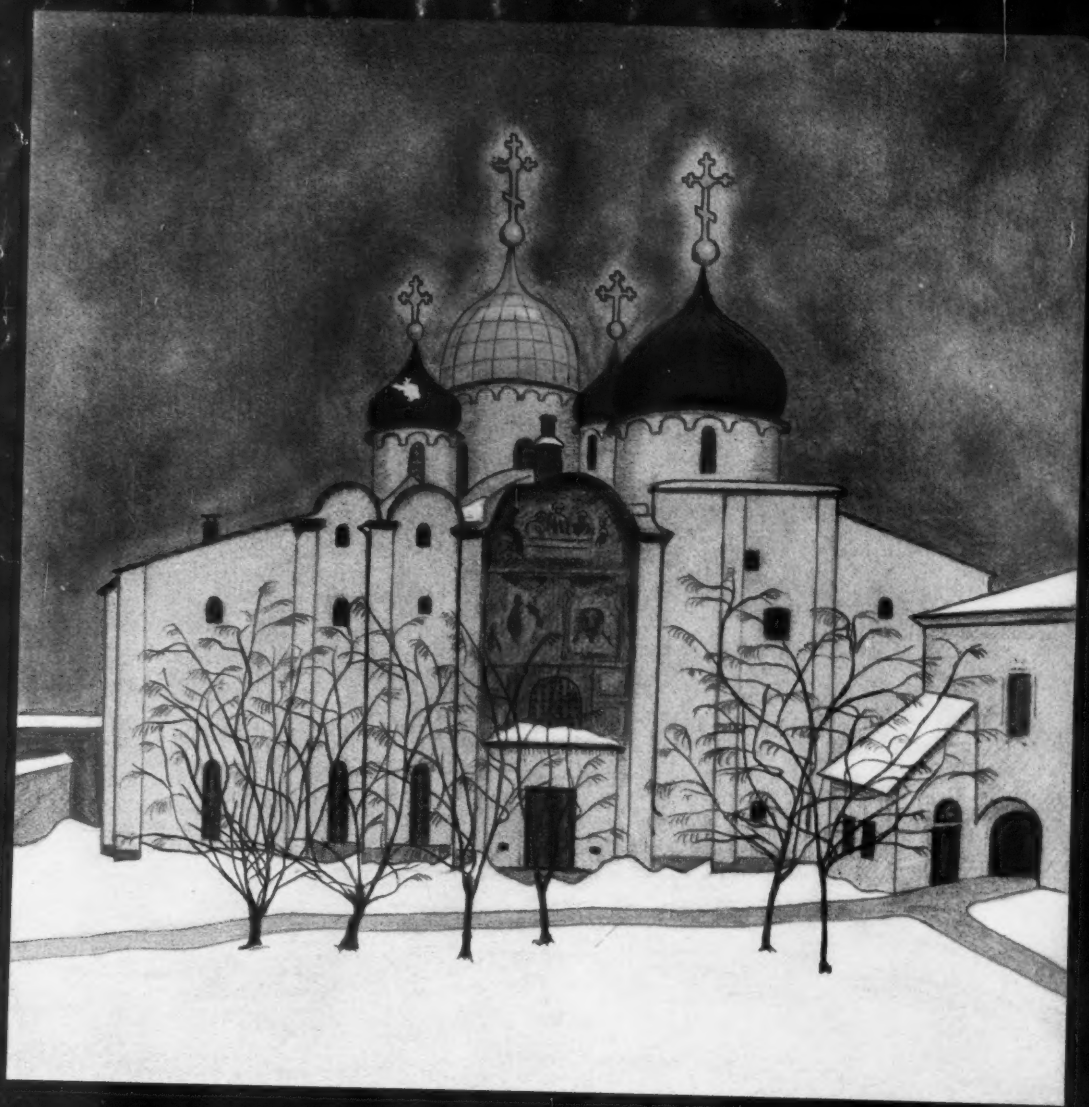
THE ARCHITECTURAL PRESS, 9 Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster, S.W.1.

Telephone:

6936 Victoria (3 lines).

Telegrams:

"Buildable, Parl, London."



Foreword

By The Editor

HARDLY a more fortunate time could have been chosen for a Russian number of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. Talk of Russia is in the air; a critical interest in the U.S.S.R. is replacing the hostility and suspicion which formerly seemed so deep-rooted in Western Europe.

An exhibition of photographs and drawings of recent Russian architecture is in preparation and will soon be held in London. The apparent incongruity of much of the work—for it varies with each school of thought in Russia, none of which as yet has been definitely accepted by the Government art officials as the right school—will be accounted for in the comprehensive survey of the present state of architecture in Russia by M. Lubetkin in this number.

In August there is to be an international congress of modern architecture in Moscow, and a movement is being made as the result of current opinion in England, for architects of this country to go to U.S.S.R. Some of them will work under Soviet conditions, as the German architects are doing at the moment under the leadership of May. Chiefly as a guide to those English architects who are going to work in Russia, and to those who are going out to attend the Conference, this number of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW has been prepared.

The architects who go to work in Russia will not come back with their pockets bulging with money as a result of having taught the U.S.S.R. English methods, or English architecture. On the contrary, they will be expected to go with some idea of Communist methods, and in order that they may, M. Lubetkin has specially written a survey of the various Russian architectural groups. With one of these the English architect will be expected to comply if he stays in the country. They consist each of a number of architects with the same opinions on construction and method and planning.

The issue is thus divided into two parts. The first half will be easy for Englishmen to understand. Mr. Byron's reactions to Soviet conditions are those of a Western European. He is impressed and antagonized. He sees the architecture first, and deduces the present state of æsthetic opinion in Russia from what has already been built. His is the traditional way of arguing, and to this country the only way that seems feasible.

The second half of the number, written by M. Lubetkin, one of the most famous proletarian architects, will seem strange. He argues in the opposite direction to Mr. Byron. He will have some logical plan for architecture first, and then build after the æsthetic theories have been found suitable for the common good.

To the English reader a discussion of architecture in terms of "ideology" will be somewhat startling. The very word may give him a headache. To look for the causes of this discomfort would take us too far. They seem to lie partly in traditional English scepticism of the value of all explanations, partly in the unfamiliarity of the term. Ideology means no more than the preconceptions with which any concrete problem is approached. Such preconceptions are admittedly necessary, and the alternative would be chaos. Science, working inductively, builds up a system of knowledge to be used in tackling future problems. The same method must be adopted sooner or later in all human activities, in architecture as elsewhere. The technique of building has already been treated in this way, but the economic and social aspects of architecture have only lately been reconsidered. They were discussed during the social and religious ages of the past, and they are widely discussed in the U.S.S.R. today.

All individual activity is to be considered not as a private affair, but as part of the general social activity. Even in individualist societies, the social significance of architecture cannot fail to be recognized; the neglect of it has led to the *art nouveau* of Munich and the slums of Manchester. In the Socialist society of the U.S.S.R. this factor naturally becomes of paramount importance, but its recognition by the individual is not enough. To formulate the concrete programme which is demanded, private opinions on what is ugly and what is not must be abolished. The individual must merge himself into a group, which considers whether matters such as either utility or planning or symbolism are of the greatest social importance to architecture. The result is not one system of ideas, but several, and it is only natural that they should then be judged in the light of that Marxian dialectic, which is the basic philosophical doctrine of the U.S.S.R. Only such theories as survive this sanctioning materialize in actual buildings.

At the present moment there are at least four distinct architectural groups possessed of four distinct theories, each with its style (decorative, symbolical, functional), and each claiming to be the true Proletarian architecture. The Communist Academy, representing the official opinion, refuses to give official preference to one group rather than to another, until enough work has been carried out to enable the masses to judge.

Those who would dismiss the writing of the Socialist contributor as verbosity and unnecessarily complicated must remember that eventually out of these schools whose opinions have been outlined by M. Lubetkin there will crystallize a definite style of Soviet architecture.

THE RUSSIAN SCENE

Part I—The Foundations

By Robert Byron.

(Reproduction in whole or part forbidden).

"TELL me, sir, how shall the mind be elevated if the body be exhausted with material preoccupations? Consider the complex conditions under which a Northern family is obliged to live. Think of the labour expended upon that unceasing duel with the elements—the extra clothing and footwear and mufflers and mantles, the carpets, the rugs, the abundant and costly food required to keep the body in sound working condition, the plumbing, the gas, the woodwork, the paintings and repaintings, the tons of fuel, the lighting in winter, the contrivances against frost and rain, the never-ending repairs to houses, the daily polishings and dustings and scrubblings and those thousand other impediments to the life of the spirit! . . . At close of day, your

Northerner is pleased with himself. He has survived; he has even prospered. . . . He fancies he has obtained the aim and object of existence. He is too dazed with the struggle to perceive how incongruous his efforts have been. What has he done? He has sacrificed himself on the altar of a false ideal. He has not touched the fringe of a reasonable life. He has performed certain social and political duties—he knows nothing of duties towards himself. I am speaking of men from whom better things might have been expected. As for the majority, the crowd, the herd—they do not exist, neither here nor anywhere else. They leave a purely physiological mark upon posterity; they propagate the species and protect their offspring. So do foxes. It is not enough for us."—NORMAN DOUGLAS.

Apologia

The European visitor to Russia who values the inheritance of European humanism finds himself regarded as a baneful reactionary full of pontifical formulas which aim not only at the pursuit of "objective truth," but at the immediate destruction of the Russian State. In compensation he will derive—unless already infected with prejudices of hate or enthusiasm—an exhilarating stimulus to rational thought from this attitude towards himself, a realization that his world's horizon has been suddenly extended beyond all preconceivable expectations. He will discover, possibly against his will, a preponderance of what he has been taught to call obscurantism and tyranny which must necessarily outweigh the best of social purposes. Nevertheless he will be obliged to admit that so great an intellectual stimulus must itself contain the seed of intrinsic good. The question is how to explain this contradiction.

My interest in Russia was mainly cultural; and, being sustained by more than spiritual encouragement from *THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW*, was largely concerned with buildings. In the golden helmets and onions of the churches, in the towered Kremlins, Baroque palaces, Empire streets, Revivalist museums, and ferrocrete tenements, and in the consistently Russian æsthetic which they all exhibit, the history and character of the Russian people stand revealed. I ask myself what future can come of so incongruous a past and present as this diverse architecture symbolizes; and what will be its influence on the future of ourselves?

But besides buildings, my attention was also directed to the builders, to the Russian individual with whom, whether as an individual or as a component in a mass, rests the future development of Russian culture. This standpoint has proved inevitably the one least calculated to offer a favourable view of Bolshevik civilization and the philosophy on which it is based. Had I been writing of Russia

—as I hope to write elsewhere—simply in order to describe my traveller's experiences, or as a country among countries in all its aspects, this account would have given far more prominence to the admirable surprises of the Russian scene, to the energy there expended, to the absence of vulgarity and of the commercial exploitation of sex-appeal, to the general emphasis on essentials, and to the grand sense of purpose that pervades the air. The comparison would have been drawn between communist and capitalist effort in the present age, and would have resolved itself very largely into a comparison between the living and the dead. But in writing of culture, I write from a narrower point of view, which is that of one who has formed his own ideas, from a study of past and present civilizations, of the conditions under which the inventive genius of individuals and nations can best flourish. I cannot write otherwise than I believe. And I believe that under the conditions which now govern the existence of the educated Russian, the arts and sciences, as we know them, cannot flourish. Before I went to Russia I believed no such thing. Even now I may be wrong; I may have seen too little, or have seen what I did see in wrong proportion. I can only write of what came to my notice and of what bearing it had on the subject in hand.

Let no one concern himself with this essay whose hope is for information about Russia of a detached, scientific kind—a mere observation of phenomena such as naturalists conduct in tide-forsaken pools. The Bolsheviks are men, not animals. I meet them as a man, not as a social zoologist. Since their every word is spoken in defence of a dogma, so then let mine be. This must be a personal account, a mobilization of personal feelings in defence of the European tradition; an attempt to keep in view a more scientific truth than that embraced by the records of the field-naturalist, and to see Russia, not as reactionaries and

enthusiasts both see her, in ethical relation to the present, but in cultural relation to the future. The forces at work are older than the Revolution, and will long survive it. They are inherent in the country and people, though hitherto partially concealed beneath a Western veneer. Hence the shock of their emergence and the universal curiosity as to their future part in history.

I cannot sufficiently emphasize the fact that the opinions here expressed are entirely confined to those which formed of their own volition in my own mind and which, in fact, did not take conscious shape till I had returned to England and settled down to consider the evidence I had collected. During a large part of my time in Russia I enjoyed the hospitality of Sir Esmond Ovey, H.M. Ambassador to the Soviet Government, and of Lady Ovey; I spent much of my time with other members of the Embassy; and I naturally sought the company of various Englishmen resident in Moscow. Of the kindness they all showed me, and of the pains they were at to promote my journeys and inquiries, I can only make this bare acknowledgment. But I must affirm categorically that the colour of the interpretation which I put on such facts as I gathered is entirely my own. So indefinite had this interpretation remained till the very end of my stay in Russia, that if one had asked me, as the ship sailed out of Odessa, what colour it was, I could not have answered him. This question was in fact put both in Constantinople and London. I had no answer to make and was considered in consequence either a dullard or an equivocator.

The assurance of my address is the assurance of the ignorant. If I claim a good enough eye and a sufficient experience of other countries to have gained some appreciation of the visual arts in Russia, it is only to admit my disadvantage in seeking to paint their present environment. For my concern with laboratories, feats of engineering, and isolated social experiments, is so faint as to be negative; and it is chiefly these particular branches of Bolshevik activity which arouse the enthusiasm of foreign visitors.

In six weeks one must choose one's field; I chose to avoid reflexes, Ford lorries, and abortion clinics. Yet it needed no knowledge of engineering to feel the romance of "construction" at Dnieperstroï—as I felt it before at Sukkur—nor the uplift of an Astor to pay credit to some hyperborean Demeter for the apple cheeks and fur-lined helmets of the children in the streets. If, sometimes, a note of rancour sounds, blame it on that immemorial Russian bureaucracy, which chose to regard me, rather in spite of itself, as an undesirable character. This arose from my irresponsibility in visiting Russia neither with an avowed purpose nor as a conducted tourist. Nearly all foreigners buy their tours beforehand, and are therefore obliged to keep to set routes. This is not to say, as so many people infer, that the visitor is only shown what the authorities want him to see. On the contrary, free movement within Russia today—except in the Turcoman republics, which are reserved for American millionaires—entails fewer formalities than before the Revolution. The advantage of the conducted tours is simply their remarkable cheapness; and since they are, very conveniently, "conducted," the tourist is naturally treated to the show-pieces of the existing regime. But as these seemed to me, even by anticipation, both extremely uninteresting and comparatively insignificant, I trusted to my own arrangements, and may here take the opportunity of thanking those who helped me make them. Travelling was consequently more difficult, but equally more entertaining. Should any echo of the laughter provoked by my journeys reach the ears of my Russian friends, they will be able to ignore, or at the best pity, such irreverence. Levity is the music that accompanies the European's whoring after false gods, gods which, in fact—and all fact is Marxist—do not exist. The orthodox Marxist, like the orthodox Christian, need only give thanks that he is not as others, and leave them to stew in their own delusions. Doubt is unbecoming to him, and susceptibility to foreign opinion is tantamount to doubt.

The Capital

The supreme moments of travel are born of beauty and strangeness in equal parts; the first panders to the senses, the second to the mind; and it is the rarity of this coincidence which makes the rarity of these moments. Such a moment was mine, when, at the age of three, I ventured on to a beach in Anglesey, and found a purple scabious; such again, when I stood on the Jelep La and surveyed the peaks of Tibet; and such once more, as I walked up the side of the River Moskva late in the afternoon of my second day in Russia. The Red Capital in winter is a silent place. Like black ghouls on the soundless snow the Muscovites went their way, hatted in fur, lamb, leather, and velvet, each with a great collar turned up against the wind that sweeps down the river from the east. With bent heads they hurried past, impervious to collision with one another, or myself, as though desensitized by a decade of mass-living. Farther on, at the corner

by the bridge, stood a line of hackney sledges, whose owners, the rearguard of capitalism, sat huddled in their portentous blue coats. Other sledges of robust build trailed by, bearing piles of hay and boxes. When they came to the slope by the bridge, they all began to go sideways, while their horses scrabbled at the ice.

This, at last, was Red Russia; this horde of sable ghosts the Bolsheviks, the cynosure of an agitated world. It was more than Russia, it was the capital of the Union, the very pulse of proletarian dictatorship, the mission-house of Materialistic philosophy. I looked across the river. Before me stood the inmost sanctuary of all: the Kremlin.

A curious irony has dowered the creed of utilitarianism with this edifice as the symbol of outward power. While collective man sits within, the walls deny him and the domes laugh aloud. Fantastic

one has always known it to be from photographs. But the reality embodies fantasy on an unearthly scale—a mile and a half of weathered, rose-coloured brick in the form of a triangle that rises uphill from its base along the river. These airy walls, which in places attain a height of forty feet, are hedged with deep crenellations, cloven and coped in white stone after the Venetian fashion. Their impalpable tint and texture might suggest rather the protection of some fabled kitchen-garden than the exigencies of medieval assault. But from their mellow escarpments bursts a succession of nineteen towers, arbitrarily placed, and exhibiting such an accumulation of architectural improbability as might have resulted had the Brobdingnagians, during a game of chess, suddenly built a castle for Gulliver with the pieces. As my eye moved westward, seven of these unbelievable structures marked the half-mile prospective, itself slightly askew, of the base-wall. At either end the angle-towers were taller than the rest, each a cylinder finished with a machicolated balcony and surmounted by an octagonal

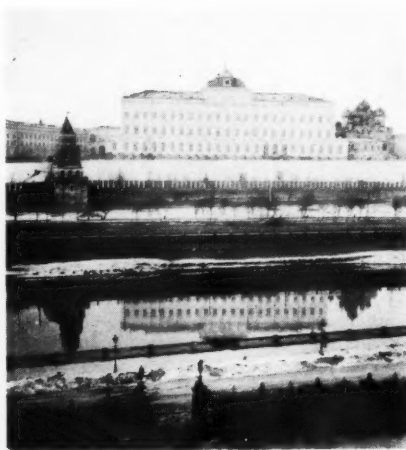
THE FOUNDATIONS



THE KREMLIN WALL AND RIVER MOSKVA, looking east.

cone, a kind of dormered cracker-hat tapering skywards to a bronze pennant. Between these two marched five squatter towers—steep, rectangular cones of dark green tiles, broken by a middle storey of the same rosy brick, but varying in height and breadth. These five towers, though they vary in particular dimensions, reflect a pattern introduced by the Tartars. Thus the historian may distinguish a Sino-Byzantine fusion accomplished under the ægis of Italian architects. Be that as it may—my attention was elsewhere. For now, within the walls, rose a white hill, as it were a long table covered with a cloth of snow, lifting up to the winter sky the residences of those vanished potentates, Tsar and God: to the west the two palaces, nineteenth-century Russo-Venetian, cream-coloured against the presage of snow in the sky; the little Italian palace of the fifteenth century, whose grey-stone façade of diamond rustications conceals the tiny apartments of the early Tsars; and then the Cathedrals: that of the Annunciation with nine onion-domes; that of the Dormition, where the coronations took place, with five helm-shaped domes; and that of the Archangel Michael, whose central bulb stands high above four of its smaller companions; nineteen domes in all, each finished with a cross, most of them thinly gilt; and then,

higher than all, the massive belfry, crowned with a flat onion; yet still overtopped by the ultimate cupola of the tower of Ivan Veliki, colossal in solitude, the climax of this Cæsaropapist fantasia. I looked down to the river below me; I looked up to the sky; I looked to the right and I looked to the left: horizontally and vertically, towers and domes, spires, cones, onions, crenellations, filled the whole view.



THE GREAT PALACE OF THE KREMLIN.
By Thon, circa 1840.

It might have been the invention of Dante, arrived in a Russian heaven.

And then as the lights came out and the snowflakes, long imminent, began to wander down in front of them, the scene became alive. As I reached the turn to the bridge, a company of soldiers came marching up the opposite street; the Red Army! visible agent of proletarian power and hardly less fantastic to my eyes than its fortress over the river. In their grey serge dressing-gowns swinging right down to the feet, and their grey serge helmets with pointed Tartar crowns, they looked like so many goblins on an infernal errand. Tramp! tramp! swung the grey serge skirts; but not a footfall sounded. From the shoulders of each goblin slanted a pair of skis, taller than the man himself, and ready to whisk him down upon some country churchyard to prod the dead. As they wheeled round to cross the bridge, they broke into a ringing chorus, taking those earnest, melancholy parts which are associated with all Russian singing. The theme of the words was doubtless Revolutionary, and, if so, not ill-suited to the effect achieved—as though the troops of ancient Russia were sallying out to a Holy War. It was quite dark now; the snow falling fast. Behind the chanting goblins the Kremlin rose aglow with electricity, like some ghostly backcloth to the hurrying city, tower upon tower, dome upon dome, piling up from the rose-red ramparts and the snowy eminence within them, to the last gigantic onion of Ivan Veliki, five hundred feet above the black river.

I followed the soldiers, and, climbing a steep road parallel with the east wall of the Kremlin, reached the Red Square. Half-way across the expanse of floodlit snow a queue had formed, ant-like in the distance, to see Lenin. The tomb was open.

I took my place next to a young Turkoman. His pale, aquiline features, properly moulded and furnished with bones, were those of an individual, and seemed companionable, despite the outlandish fleece that crowned them, among these casual-bred Slavs. But for a group of peasants clad in leather and shod with birch-bark, they presented the usual characterless appearance of all urban populations—the mass-man about to pay his Russian homage to his new and Russian Christ.

A halt preceded our entry while they swept out the snow left by the previous pilgrims. Then, two by two, the Turkoman with me, we entered the bronze wicket in the low balustrade. Two sentries, with fixed bayonets and sheepskin ruffs, stood on either side of the door. The vestibule was blank, but for the Soviet emblem—hammer and sickle on a globe supported by sheaves of wheat—in silver relief on the grey stone. Turning to the left, a flight of stairs and a subterranean corridor led us down to the vault.

In the midst of this tall, dim interior, sheeted with sombre, close-grained stones, the mummy lay on a tall pedestal sheltered by an inverted cradle of plate-glass, and brightly lit. Below, in pairs at either end, stood four sentries. We lengthened into single file. Mounting a flight of

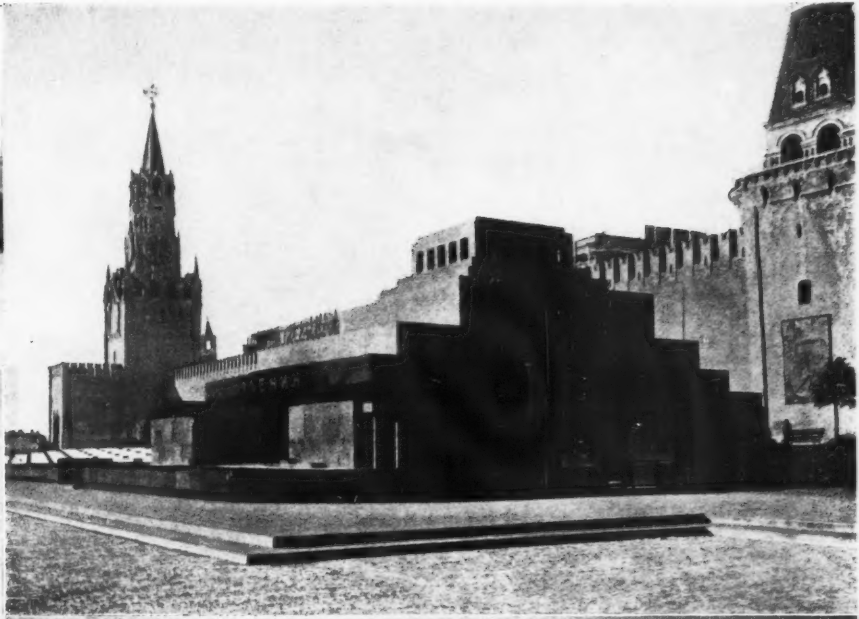


THE KREMLIN, showing the cathedrals and the tower of Ivan Veliki. The latter was built in 1600 and is 310 feet high, standing altogether 450 feet above the level of the river.

PLATE II. *May 1932.*



LENIN'S MAUSOLEUM IN THE RED SQUARE



The illustrations show the old wooden mausoleum, built immediately after Lenin's death in 1924 (3), and the architect's original drawing for it (4); also the new one, of slightly squatter design, recently finished in stone (1) and (2). The architect is Stchouzev, aged about fifty years, who built the Kazan Station before the war, and has been one of the judges of the recent competition for the People's Palace. He is a man of real taste and artistic feeling who has begun to dislike the grey concrete structures of the revolutionary period—despite the fact that he has built some of them himself—and believes in the necessity of architectural colour in the Russian scene. An example of this is his large new office block for the Commissariat of Agriculture's new building in the heart of Moscow which is to be faced with grey, green and white scagliola.

The original mausoleum had to be designed in a great hurry. Stchouzev produced the sketch here published in one night and was inspired by the convergent form which is found in funerary monuments of prehistoric times, and of remote antiquity, and seems to represent an instinct common to humanity in all countries.

It had been suggested that the monument should occupy the middle of the Red Square; but the architect decided that in such a position it would interrupt the view of Basil Blajenny. So he placed it beneath the Kremlin Walls, at the same time giving it an oblong shape which might conform with that of the Square. On either side of the main entrance there were built two tribunes, to be occupied by prominent members of the Government on State occasions. This provides the monument with a certain degree of utility which, however, is not utilitarian and only increases its grandeur.

The wooden version of the mausoleum lasted five years. The present monument is built of red Ukrainian granite, and black and grey Ukrainian labrador, which contains flecks of iridescent blue light like that on a butterfly's wing. The lantern is surmounted by a monolith of red carelian porphyry, 26½ ft. in length, and weighing 59 tons. All these stones have a glass-like polish, which enhances the building's novelty without, at the same time, detracting from its harmony with the red Kremlin Wall behind it. The whole building, in fact, is constructed—or gives the illusion of being constructed—of superb blocks of stone, whose gigantic size is reminiscent of the Inca Walls. The form is gained partly by the use of

the three colours, black, grey and red, as an instrument of proportion, and partly by the irregular succession of steps on which these colours are employed. But these steps, though irregular, are far from haphazard. Their ratios, both of height and width, are calculated with the utmost nicety, so as to increase the effect of power and strength. The base of the monument is slightly above the level of the Square, and is enclosed within a low parapet, whose front corners are rounded, and whose rear corners are finished with two small pavilions. This parapet, these pavilions, as well as the long rows of tribunes which run parallel with the Kremlin Wall, are built of a greyish-white granite, only semi-polished, and having a very close and hard texture. The parapet is entered by a low double wicket of bronze bars, flanked by two further slabs of red porphyry, which point inwards towards the main entrance. Within the parapet on either side of this entrance have been planted small fir trees, which, it must be hoped, will not be allowed to grow too high. On the other hand, a background of taller fir trees immediately beneath the Kremlin Wall materially assists the composition.

Of the inner chamber I can give no detailed description, since the queue was always pressing on my heels, and I had no time to examine it. Stchouzev told me, however, that the frieze of vitreous red lightning which I have mentioned in my article was done by a process only known in Russia, and involving the action of copper acid on glass.

As a memorial to Lenin, as an expression of his character, as a triumph-monument to the gigantic effort and suffering involved in the successful accomplishment of the Revolution, and, lastly, as an addition, wholly worthy, to the unrivalled beauties of the old capital of Russia, Stchouzev's Mausoleum deserves the highest rank among the architectural efforts of this age.

THE FOUNDATIONS



THE RED SQUARE, from the roof of the Historical Museum, showing the church of Basil Blajenny, Lenin's Mausoleum, and the adjacent tribunes. Behind the latter runs the Kremlin wall, ending in the famous Spassky gateway. The earlier part of this was built in 1491 by Ruffo and Solario, and the Gothic tower in 1625, by an Englishman named Christopher Holloway.

steps, I took my view and, in virtue of the atmosphere, paid my homage. Round the walls, I noticed, ran a frieze of vitreous scarlet lightning.

Lenin must have been a very small man. He rests on a bed of dun-coloured draperies, which engulf his legs with the tasteful negligence of a modiste's window. His upper part wears a khaki jacket buttoned at the neck. The finely modelled hands and features are of waxen texture, like the petals of a magnolia flower. The beard and moustache turn from straw-colour to brown, a fact which caused Bernard Shaw more surprise (so he told me) than anything else in his self-patented Russian Elysium. One might have said: A nice little man, fond of his grandchildren, and given to pruning his trees. I wondered whether a countenance so placid and benign was not really made of wax. For rumour insists that the sewers of the Kremlin recently overflowed into the shrine, to the detriment of its keepsake. But when I got outside, I had not walked a hundred yards before I met an old man with features, beard, and expression exactly similar to those I had just examined. So that there need be nothing inherently

false about the present appearance of the relic.

The Red Square was so called long before the Revolution, since the Russian words for "red" and "beautiful" are the same. Still the snow falls, each flake softly sparkling in the electric haze. At the north end of the great white oblong rises the blood-coloured bulk of the Historical Museum, a building in Ye Olde Russian style, but now transformed into something fairylike by the snow filigree on its twin steeples and twisting rooflets. Along the Kremlin side runs the same crenellated rose-red wall, interrupted by three towers. That near the Museum, which carries a slender, cold green spire, was blown up by Napoleon, but rebuilt according to the old design after his departure. At the other end of the square, to the south, stands the famous Spassky tower, a castle of brick surmounted by Gothic pinnacles and finials of white stone, which remind one of Wren's Tom Tower, and were actually built by an Englishman, Christopher Holloway, in 1625. This bears a rich octagonal steeple, decorated with a gilt clock-face. From the topmost apex shines the emblem of

the Tsars, a golden eagle, whose glinting double heads act as a signpost to the stranger lost in the "China Town" opposite.

These two towers, with one other on the west side, are the chief entrances to the Kremlin. Between them the wall is broken by a blind tower of the rectangular double-cone type, above which appears a flat dome of green copper, in the austere Greek style of the later Catherine period. From this dome floats a plain red flag, emblem no longer of the rowdy May-Day farce in other capitals, but invested with the dignity of its architectural surroundings. Beneath the wall runs a series of low tribunes in grey-white granite. These are interrupted, immediately below the tower, by Lenin's tomb, which is backed by a screen of small black fir-trees. The tomb is squat and powerful, in-stepped like a Ziggurat, and polished like a public-house. It is built of black labrador and red granite from the Ukraine, topped by a slab of Karelian porphyry. The colour of the granite is not our anæmic pink, but a deep rhubarb-red, slightly tinged with ochre. This colour strikes a mean between the scarlet flag and the pink walls, and thus fits the monument harmoniously upon its ancient stage.

Last of all, at the far end where the ground begins to slope down to the river, rises the famous church of Basil Blajenny—Basil the Blessed. Lying slightly below the general level of the square, yet with no other buildings behind it, it closes the panorama like some phantom ship ice-bound against the skyline. Or in circus mood one might compare it with a giant's cocoanut-shy, whose drab nuts have been replaced by sea-urchins, leeks, pine-apples, and peeled pomegranates at different levels—multicoloured fruits, spiral, spiked and fluted, that tempt Lenin's ghost to warm itself on cold nights by potting snowballs at them. There are always a few nocturnal drunks about the Red Square. Perhaps some staggering mystic, or a frozen cabman, or a posse of G.P.U. raiders, passing by in the small hours, have already seen that all-familiar figure clambering wraithlike up its mausoleum for one more shot at the embodied past. I can hardly be sure that I myself, after a certain party at the Metropole, did not discern one or two extra-human missiles hurtling through the air towards that green pineapple with the red scales. . . . But the less of this the better. When I emerged from inspecting Lenin's more solid remains on this particular afternoon, it was barely teatime. Suddenly the Spassky clock rang out the hour on the last of the Moscow bells, whose deep melodious chimes never failed, so long as I stayed in the town, to give me a little start of melancholy and pleasure. And as the first clang echoed over the snow and along the red walls, a black smoke of crows shot up into the sky, cawing and croaking their contempt for that motionless anachronism, the Tsar's eagle.

The vision was over. I had exchanged the experience of a moment for a memory that will support me till I die. I shall never see Moscow again as I saw it on that afternoon.

But beside the Moscow of dreams waited a Moscow not less unique—that of men. I left the square by the side of the Historical Museum, where the Iberian gateway used to stand, and, crossing the Opera Square, came to the Hotel Metropole. Here I was to deliver three precious lemons, for the use of Albert Coates who was suffering from a carbuncle. I was also to meet a young English communist named Morgan.

I expected a hatchet-faced consumptive. I perceived a Nordic giant. Morgan was once a chauffeur, but having seen light in a Russian film, had made his way to the land of promise and creative outlet. As that land had seemed to him from a distance, so it had continued to seem, despite loneliness, language difficulty, and food-shortage during the early months. I admired his courage in having overcome such obstacles. He now worked with a band of students drawn from thirty-seven nationalities, dividing his time between Materialistic philosophy and the Moscow film studios, and receiving a salary on which he lives.

I had brought him some parcels, which, being ignorant of their contents, I had persuaded the customs officials at Negoreloje not to open. He seemed to assume, therefore, that I, too, had found light. Our conversation was, consequently, at cross-purposes. It started with my asking the waiter for some vodka.

M. We don't want any of that dope here.

R. B. Sorry, but I can't live without alcohol.

M. Oh, well, I suppose you'll grow up some time.

R. B. I suppose so. But I'm beginning to doubt if I shall ever grow up into a communist. (Morgan looked surprised.) Anyhow, I'm not interested in politics. What I want to know is, not whether the five-year plan is going to succeed, or how many million peasants will know the alphabet in ten years' time, but whether anything *really* important, any advance in human thought or happiness, is going to come of so much misery as the Russians have gone through. I feel it will; but I can't see how it can, when you substitute a banal ideology for the free exercise of the mind. Soviet culture, for example—what and where is it?

M. You're full up with the old ideas; you don't understand. Our art must be a collective art and we've got to produce an intelligentsia that will think and create collectively. It was different during the revolutionary period, when every one was *inspired*. The constructive period, which we're settling down to, is harder to express in art.

R. B. You mean there isn't the same epic feeling of excitement?

M. That's right. The struggle goes on though, just the same.

R. B. (petulantly). I wish to God you'd tell me what you mean by this struggle you all talk about. Struggle with what? I shouldn't have thought there was anyone left in Russia to struggle with by now.

M. Don't you understand that *everything's* a struggle. If I put this glass of water on this table, the glass and the

table are at war—their actual contact is a struggle. It's the same in social evolution. The workers can only build socialism by struggling, by continuing the class-war right through.

R. B. So that when you've done away with classes, all you do is to create new ones and make an aristocracy out of a few million factory workers, who rule the country by oppressing, i.e. struggling with, the remaining majority. How anything creative, or even interesting, can come from this obsession with class, I fail to see. It's worse than England.

M. There's not much you do see. Now look at Beethoven. Of course we admit he was a genius. But you can see how the class-struggle of the time comes out in his symphonies. Or Wagner. When he had been exiled for revolutionary opinions, he wrote the *Ring*. Then he became a good bourgeois again, and the result was *Parsifal*.

R. B. (soothingly). *Parsifal* is dreadful, I admit. I suppose if I translate what you're trying to tell me into ordinary language, all it means is that genius is the product of environment. There's nothing very new in that. And may I ask whether you think Newton could ever have thought out the law of gravity in the environment of modern Russia?

M. Of course he could have. Our laboratories here are better equipped than any in Europe.

R. B. I'm talking about thought, not experiment—something that goes on in one person at a time. If you take all the great periods of human invention, scientific or otherwise, you'll find that people were free to think as they wished. There was an atmosphere of disinterested inquiry. The nineteenth century in England for example—it produced Marx's *Capital* among other things, and he says as much in the preface.¹ Or the Renaissance . . .

M. (incredulously). The Renaissance!! Coo! there you are. The Renaissance was simply a phase in the class-struggle, the beginning of the capitalist age, when the merchants and the bourgeoisie began to rise to power.

R. B. (firmly). My dear Morgan, you remind me of an evangelical preacher, who's right before God, when every one else is wrong. I don't mind being wrong.

¹ "The social statistics of Germany and the rest of Continental Western Europe are, in comparison with those of England, wretchedly compiled . . . We should be appalled at the state of things at home, if, as in England, our governments and parliaments appointed periodically commissions of inquiry into economic conditions; if these commissions were armed with the same plenary powers to get at the truth; if it was possible to find for this purpose men as competent, as free from partisanship and respect of persons, as are the English factory-inspectors, her medical reporters on public health, her commissioners of inquiry into the exploitation of women and children, into housing and food . . . In England the progress of social disintegration is palpable. When it has reached a certain point, it must react on the Continent . . . For this reason, as well as others, I have given so large a space in this volume to the history, the details, and the results of English factory legislation. One nation can and should learn from others."—*Capital*, Preface to the first edition, 1867.

But I haven't come all the way to Russia to argue with people like St. Athanasius. It's too boring. I admire your enthusiasm, and I wish to understand what gives rise to it. It doesn't help me in the least to be told that everything that ever happened was a manifestation of the class-struggle. Do you think there were revolutions among the lung-fish? I dare say the Revolution was an excellent thing for Russia. I wouldn't put the clock back for a moment. But what I want to know is whether it holds the seed of hope for the rest of the world beneath this desiccated husk of class ideology.

M. We're absolutely different. You can't be expected to have the right outlook. You're . . .

R. B. I'm of a different class, you mean?

M. That's it. Your voice—it sounds affected to me.

R. B. Perhaps it is. But I don't see that that's any reason why we should start a class war over this table, or why the G.P.U. should send old professors to the Urals for writing about Byzantine icons.

M. They belong to the wrong class—they're our enemies. The intellectuals have let us down too often. We can't take any more risks, when the war may come at any moment.

R. B. There you go again. What war?

M. It's happened once. What about the Intervention?

R. B. D'you think the whole of England is peopled with Churchills?

M. I don't know about that, but war's coming all right. Why, it's beginning already in Manchuria. What's more, I tell you seriously that in two or three years' time I hope to be inviting my comrades from here to stay with me in Buckingham Palace.

R. B. That's a very bourgeois ambition. (Inconsequently) Do you get on with Jews?

M. I'm pretty used to them after living in the East End. I like them. Still, they're not quite the same as yourself. Let's go up and see Sylvia Chen.

R. B. Why, is she a Jewess?

M. No, she's a daughter of Eugene Chen and a French negress. Her brother's a commander in the Red Army, and she's a dancer.

We went upstairs to Miss Chen's apartment. Though her shelves groaned with the early fathers of Materialism, she was temporarily engrossed with the difficulty of obtaining new dance records, since Jazz is proscribed by the Russian Customs as "ideologically incorrect." Even Morgan, now released from argument, admitted the hardship of this deprivation. They put on an old record, and Miss Chen hopped about, a pretty creature against the antiquated plush of her surroundings.

"What are you going to do in Russia?" she asked me.

I said I hoped of course to go to Leningrad, and also to Novgorod to see the old churches.

"Churches?" she answered. "Whatever interests you about that kind of dead stuff?"

I felt I could hardly explain.



THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, at Korovniko, near Yaroslavl. Sunset.

Historical

I have given the conversation on page 179 as one specimen out of many. I had come to a new world: Morgan was to me as the kangaroo to Captain Cook or as the Erewhonians to the Edwardians. Yet since he was neither beast nor fiction, I could not, and cannot, treat him and his like with the polite detachment of a zoologist. This is the normal attitude of the visiting foreigner, than which, if the Russians only realized it, nothing is more insulting to them. Nevertheless, beneath the insane babble of Marxian clichés, I was conscious of forces whose reality was not to be denied, and whose significance aroused my avid curiosity. This curiosity, I knew, would go unrequited unless I could see beyond the fanatics and jargon that obscure every view in modern Russia.

The first condition of understanding for the stranger is to realize that the Revolution and all that followed it were the outcome of processes which began

with Russian history and will end with it. The Byzantine Orthodox Church has always been distinguished from the Catholic in that its ideal is rather the attainment of heaven on earth by means of contemplation than the pursuit of a satisfactory after-life. From the domination of ideas which this Church exercised from the tenth century on, no Renaissance ever delivered Russia. Nor were the serfs, as in other countries, liberated from their material slavery by an economic demand for fluid labour. Thus the Russian has always conceived of progress as a mass-advance towards an immediate millennium rather than as a succession of steps taken by gifted individuals towards objective truth. While no country has produced more theorists on the theme of human betterment, their concern has always been with the prompt delivery rather than with the quality of the perfection supplied. Only by this means could the mass of humanity, whose

mystic elevation has always been the keynote of Russian speculation, be adequately embraced. The individual, wedded to objective thought for its own selfish sake, was ignored as a permanent factor in the social scheme, for the obvious reason that the Russians have no conception of the individual in this sense—a fact which emerges plainly enough from those travesties of humanity which form the individual heroes of Russian novels.

In the last century, the rise of an intellectual class gave mouth and power to this Russo-Messianic concept of collective uplift. At the same time there arrived from the West the new industrial idea of a purely physical universe ruled by a God who was nothing more than a chemist-engineer. Such an idea, reacting on the pervasive mysticism of Orthodoxy and the fantastic sects that had sprouted from so fertile a soil, produced a philosophic vacuum, a kind of mystic nothingness, which was elaborated into a system by Bakunin (1814-76) under the name of Nihilism. Then began the classic era of sacrificial plotters, whose dramatic assassinations attracted the attention of the outside world. It was complacently imagined by their liberal sympathizers in other countries that the murderers, if slightly misguided in their methods, were inspired by the desire to free their country from a brutal autocracy. Even today this idea is ingeniously fostered in the minds of foreign tourists by the transformation of the fortress of Peter and Paul, where the chief rebels were confined, into a museum for the display of Tsarist atrocity. I was fain to ask whether anyone had yet considered adapting the new headquarters of the G.P.U. in the Lubyanka to a similar purpose; to which question my guide, who was not a fool, had no answer. The hatred of the anarchists for the Monarchy was doubtless genuine and disinterested. But if anyone wishes to disabuse himself of the illusion that they wished to substitute for it a regime of Anglo-Saxon liberty, let him read the appendix to René Fülöp-Miller's *Mind and Face of Bolshevism*, which contains quotations from *The Possessed* and *The Brothers Karamazov*, written by Dostoevsky in 1871 and 1879. Even these prophetic utterances are superfluous. For did not Lenin say that freedom was a bourgeois prejudice?

The European may stigmatize as merely destructive the Russian theorist's obsession with a joyless, unwilling mass-nirvana, and as impracticable his conception of the human mass as the one and only agent of human advance, obedient to the impulses of its Narcissistic mysticism. He may even be permitted a just indignation, when these ideas threaten the structure of his own laboriously evolved tradition. But it serves no end to curse the Russians for thinking as they do, or to depreciate their ideal of enabling the mass to exchange its bestial sloth for an inspired self-immolation on the altar of industrial productivity. It is not our ideal. We aim at an increasing distribution of material benefits within a framework that preserves the prerogatives of the individual. But let us understand that Bolshevism, whether it

prove economically feasible or not, derives directly and genuinely from the Russian view of the universe, which regards the passion of the mass-man for the sake of the mass-man as the highest form of human expression.

Meanwhile Nihilism and its like offered incentive to individual self-sacrifice, but no programme for co-ordinated action. This deficiency was to be filled in part by Karl Marx, who propounded a new philosophy of historical evolution, and in part by Lenin, who, with the usual Russian impatience to be in at the Second Coming, extracted from that philosophy a social doctrine capable of immediate application, and, since evolution was concerned, conceived himself to be the proper agent for speeding up that cumbrous process.

Karl Marx arrived in London in 1849 and there devoted himself to research among the voluminous materials that had already been collected anent the conditions of the English working-classes. In his lighter moments he entertained a wholesome respect for class-distinctions and established authority: "he attended at the Society of Arts a soirée graced by the presence of royalty; . . . he liked his wife to sign herself 'Jenny, née Baronne de Westphalen' . . . finally he accepted the office of constable of the vestry of St. Pancras, taking the customary oath, and donning the regulation uniform on gala occasions."¹ He retained his enthusiasm for Germany, "sang the praises of German music and literature," and regarded Germany's part in the war of 1870 as purely defensive.

His contribution to thought was his conception of society as something fluid, in a state of perpetual change and becoming, and his adumbration of a law governing this process. It is claimed that, as Darwin to biology, so he stands in relation to sociology. The claim is somewhat exaggerated, for whereas Darwin could base his deductions on the whole of the world's history, Marx was necessarily confined to that comparatively narrow field contained in the written records of a few thousand years. Starting with the premise that all "value" is the outcome of labour, his law of evolution naturally developed a purely economic complexion: all societies are based on the exploitation of labour in some form or another, and since the exploiters cannot be expected to relinquish their privileged position of their own accord, it is only by explosions of violence that the changes rendered necessary by changing methods of economic production are brought about; these explosions are the outcome of a permanent, though generally latent, struggle—the class-war; as for politics, morals, religion, art, and the rest, these are but the ideological expression of that struggle. In Marx's opinion, the moment was at last approaching when labour should free itself from the last of a succession of exploiting classes and assume the whole fruits of its own toil for itself. Thus his theory of social evolution dissolves, or is dissolved by those who would put it to

practical use, in the mist of an imminent millennium. One is left in doubt as to whether, once the workers cease to be exploited, the Marxian law will continue to operate or not.

In putting forward his theory of the evolution of society according to economic laws, Marx added something to the general technique of historical inquiry. But in seeking to found, upon the basis of those laws, an all-embracing philosophy, he displayed a lack of scientific method which must be ascribed to the Jew's inability to apprehend the reality of emotions and ideals of which he himself has no personal experience.

It were redundant to indicate which particular points in the Marxian philosophy brought grist to the revolutionary mill. But it cannot be sufficiently stressed

how easily these theories might have disappeared into the limbo enjoyed by most of their kind, but for their transformation into a militant creed of action at the hands of Lenin. For good or evil, Lenin was one of the most remarkable characters in history, not only by virtue of his influence on the fate of millions, but for his individual pertinacity and consistency in working towards an apparently impossible goal. In the Marxian theory he saw a practical instrument and he shaped it to that end. To read his works after those of Marx is like turning to the Athanasian Creed from the Sermon on the Mount. He found in Marx the raw material for both a politico-economic programme and a philosophy to uphold it. When the time came, the weapons were ready forged, and he brought them into play.



A DISTANT VIEW OF YAROSLAVL with a frozen arm of the Volga in the foreground.

Nervous Tension

Into the exact nature of the political organism that today exists as the result of Lenin's activities, I do not propose to inquire; abler heads than mine have run themselves against this brick wall, and will continue to do so. But I wish to record a very definite impression on my part of the nervous insecurity and strain that prevails among all educated and semi-educated people in Russia, members of the Communist Party included. The incidents that contributed to form this impression were cumulative in their effect and in any case too numerous to recount. Indeed, its origin was atmospheric as much as circumstantial. But if it was a correct impression, its importance is vital to the sifting of the ashes whence the phoenix of

collective culture must eventually arise. The stranger must inquire what produces it.

In describing the system under which they live, the Russians themselves invariably make use of two terms, one political, the other economic. These are "the dictatorship of the proletariat" and "State capitalism."

The "proletariat" is a name for that hypothetical mass with whose aims Lenin, as a good Russian, necessarily identified his own. But the word, when used in the Marxian sense, denotes a fluid supply of labour, without anchorage or possessions, at the beck and call of economic, i.e. capitalistic, demand. Unfortunately, this particular kind of mass scarcely existed in Russia at the time of the Revolution. Thus

¹ A. Loria: *Karl Marx*, London 1920, p. 48.



THE HARLOT OF YAROSLAVL: a peasant painter's conception of her fate. In the corner her father kneels in intercession for her. This is a fresco in the church of Prophet Elias, Yaroslavl. Middle of the seventeenth century. Size 4' 6" x 2' 6".

the Bolsheviks, having established a government which has alienated the sympathies of the intellectual class by its tyranny and an economic system which, if judged by their own material standards, was, and is, a total failure from the point of view of the peasant, lack the chief support postulated by their creed, the very lynch-pin of the whole theoretical structure. Until this support is created—that is to say, until at least a bare majority of the Russian population has been recruited into the ranks of the true proletarian nucleus already centred in the large towns—the present rulers of Russia must continue in their present state of nervous insecurity, particularly when they consider the volume of existing discontent, passive though it be. Hence the frantic efforts that have been, and are being, made to create a fluid rural proletariat by impressing peasants into the collective farms—by, in fact, the artificial stimulation of that very process which the whole of *Capital* was meant to damn for ever and ever.

Says Marx, after lauding the independence of the English peasant before our great enclosures took place: "What the capitalist system demanded was, on the other hand, a degraded and almost servile condition of the mass of the people, the transformation of them into mercenaries, and of their means of labour into capital." Says Lenin, in his article on Marx written for a Russian encyclopædia: "If, finally, we wish to understand the attitude of Marxian socialism towards the smaller peasantry . . . we must turn to a declaration by Engels expressing Marx's views: 'When we are in possession of the powers of the State, we shall not even dream of forcibly expropriating the poorer peasants . . . Our task as regards the smallholders will first of all consist in transforming their individual production and individual ownership into

co-operative production and co-operative ownership, not forcibly, but by way of example, and by offering social aid for this purpose.'"¹ Well might Marx cause an earthquake in the Highgate cemetery and Lenin burst his mausoleum to fragments, could they have witnessed the treatment of the Russian peasant carried out in their names during the last two years.

So bitter and so widespread has been the resentment aroused by this treatment that Stalin, temporarily at least, has had a stop put to it. It is the result, not of socialism, but of State capitalism, as the Russians admit. Marx was at pains to point out that capitalists always tend to absorb one another. "Along with the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital . . . grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation." Is this true of Russia, where the number of capitalists has been diminished to one? If so, what will be the result?

Either the peasants, incensed beyond all

¹ Lenin: *Collected Works*, Authorized English edition, vol. xviii, p. 42.

Gods

It was recognized from the beginning by Lenin and his coadjutors that allegiance to their politico-economic system must depend, in the long run, on a general acceptance of its concomitant philosophy by those capable of even the most rudimentary mental activity. In attempting to secure this allegiance they were at once face to face with the weakest link in their carefully forged chain for the bondage of the individual—with, in fact, a link so weak as to constitute a gap. To remedy this deficiency they have exercised an ingenuity which deserves the success it is receiving. But the very contrivances to which they are obliged to resort, reveal more clearly than anything else the totally unscientific character of the philosophy to which they are committed.

The exponents of Materialism, both Russian and Jewish, regard the universe as composed solely of phenomena whose reality can be subjected to the empirical test of their own senses. Religion is their bane. It diverts man's attention and effort from the society in which he lives; its priesthood is invariably the agent of political and social stagnation. This view is rational enough, and, though one may take occasional exception to it, not difficult to acquiesce in or at least to understand. But the Materialists are also the victims of a frenzied and irrational hate for those ancient beliefs and institutions which symbolize, possibly in its crudest form, the search of mankind for a central Reality and, consequently, the prime obstacle to the spread of the New Gospel. This

reason, will resist all attempts to proletarianize them; in which case they will be permanently at odds with the communist aristocracy of the towns, and the class-war will go on, thus vindicating Marx's theory of evolution. Or they will surrender themselves to a joyless impersonal exploitation by the State, redeemed by elementary education and broadcast culture; and Marx's theory will either die of classless inanition or receive its most terrific vindication in a subsequent revolt on the part of the expropriated against the one grand expropriator—the State. Both alternatives hold possibilities well calculated to disturb the present rulers. They have staked everything on the Five-Year Plan. This, if it succeeds, should create a purely industrial proletariat of sufficient size to support them and recruited without the ill-feeling produced by compulsory measures. Meanwhile the tension, as of a man fighting for his life, pervades the whole country. It may not conduce to the pursuit of objective truth or the creation of great art, but it results in a great activity and exercise of the mind.

hate, amounting almost to dementia, has prevented them from conducting any detached inquiry into the reason why religion exists and always has existed. Ostrich-like they have failed to recognize that religion fulfils some fundamental human need.

After the Revolution, religion in Russia fell, or was thrust, into very general desuetude. No sooner did this happen than the needs which, however superficially or improperly, it had hitherto satisfied, made themselves apparent in an atmosphere of licence, restlessness, and



Art nouveau gazebo in coloured tiles and pergola work of *THE KZECHINSKY PALACE, LENINGRAD*, from which Lenin started the October revolution in November 1917.



THE RUSSIAN SCENE. A distant view of Korovniko, near Yaroslavl, across an ice-bound tributary of the Volga. In the foreground barbed wire entanglements remaining from the civil war.

disillusionment. Village life had lost its keystone; the peasant his theatre; among the educated or semi-educated classes was felt an equal lack of that faith or code without which life cannot be regulated. In addition, the new rulers were not slow to discover that they, too, had lost something, and that this was hardly the moment to dispense with the traditional ally of all government. "Religion," they had thundered, "is the opium of the people." The practical value of this maxim now became fully apparent to them. Since all pre-existing religions were proscribed by the new philosophy, there was only one course open to them in their need for a popular soporific. This was to erect the philosophy itself into a religion. And this they have done. They have preserved the jealousy of the God of Israel while dispensing with the God himself, and the external ceremony of the Orthodox Church while dispensing with the Church. In place of the single God enthroned in heaven, they have substituted the Mass enthroned on earth; in place of the Church, a hierarchy no less intolerant—YOUTH. It is a different kind of opium; its dreams are less reposeful. But it works.

The Italian Professor Achille Loria closes his monograph on Karl Marx with words which might almost be supposed, by one ignorant of their context, to emanate from a newly-discovered papyrus of St. John the Divine :—

For the day is coming. And in that day, when remorseless time shall have destroyed the statues of the saints and of the warriors, renescent humanity will raise in honour of the author of this work of destruction, upon the shores of his native stream, a huge mausoleum representing the proletarian breaking his chains and entering upon an era of conscious and glorious freedom. Thither will come the regenerated peoples bearing garlands of remembrance and of gratitude to lay upon the shrine of the great thinker, who, amid sufferings, humiliations, and numberless privations, fought unceasingly for the ransom of mankind. And the mothers, as they show to their children the suffering and suggestive figure, will say, their voices trembling with emotion and joy: See from what darkness our light has come forth; see how many tears have watered the seeds of our joy; look, and pay reverence to him who struggled, who suffered, who died for the Supreme Redemption.

True, the Rhine still waits its promised monument. But I could not help thinking, as I walked about Moscow on January 22 last, what a graceful and at the same time inexpensive gesture the British Government might make by unearthing the bones of Marx and his Jenny in Highgate¹ and presenting them to Russia. Lenin, after all, is only second best. Still, he makes a

¹ They share God's acre with those of Thomas Hood the poet, and Lillywhite the cricketer. Coleridge is round the corner in a coke-house. I am indebted for this information to Bishop Betjeman, the father of necropolitan research.

very decent pilgrimage, and the patriot type of saint is certainly the more fashionable at the moment.

Lenin died on January 21. For some inscrutable Russian reason his death is mourned, or was this year, on January 22. The Red Good Friday proved the occasion for elaborate manifestations of dolour, such as mark the same season in Rome. To all shops and offices of any pretension, red banners, bearing the hammer and sickle in gold, and bound in black, had been distributed, and now hung motionless in the cold fog with which nature was participating in the national grief. The grandiose front of the Bolshoy Theatre, the Opera, was draped on either side with an immense arras of the same character; while across the portico the name LENIN was blazoned in scarlet light, like a gigantic IHS. In addition to this Latin ostentation, something of the English Sabbath had crept in. The sale of alcohol was forbidden, lest the dignity of the occasion should be marred by the usual inebriate holiday-makers. Even food was difficult to obtain. At the same time hotels and restaurants were crowded with congresses and delegations assembled to observe the sacred day. In the Red Square, a queue had formed such as one sees in London when a dead king lies in state, twisting and turning over that great expanse of snow, like one of those wire puzzles that have neither end nor

beginning. From morning till night it shuffled convulsively along, a foot at a time. There might have been ten or a hundred thousand people; I could find no means of computing. But it struck me that none of them would have been there, to stand for an hour in a temperature of several degrees below zero, unless actuated by genuine emotion and a personal conviction of the solemnity of the occasion.

The instances of resemblance between the outward manifestations of the Materialist faith and those of the older religions could be multiplied indefinitely; they astonish the visitor at every turn. In factories and clubs, the icon corner has been replaced by the Lenin or the Marx corner: hideous busts of pseudo-bronze stand on pyramidal pedestals draped in red, bowered in red, and backed with red. In the separate rooms, less expensive coloured prints replace the erstwhile less expensive icons, forerunners of a new and monotonous hagiography depicting Stalin, Kalinin, Krupskaya, and Budenny. In the large towns, every third shop window teems with these frightful representations, of all sizes to suit all purses, and exhibiting a lack of artistry sickening to behold. On being told the sum formerly derived by the Pechersky Lavra in Kiev from the sale of holy pictures, I was anxious to learn what profit accrued to the present government from the same source. The answer to my inquiry was, that far from there being any profit, the State actually incurred a considerable loss in promoting the distribution of its blessed effigies.

In addition to dead saints, there are the living early Fathers, the Jeromes, Clements, Origenes, and Athanasiiuses, who thunder out their daily commentaries on the central creed and its application to the daily emergency with the prolific inconsequence induced by modern printing facilities. In Kremlin, commissariat, club, factory, institute, and school, these early Fathers reside and multiply, seeking heresies and definitions with the appetite of Byzantine Christologists. Fortunately for their happiness, there is no end to either, since their dogma is based on the most uncertain of all sciences and the details of its proper practice are as elusive as quicksilver.

These Christian similes may sound far-fetched; but though individual definitions of what does and does not constitute a religion may differ, they do in fact convey better than any other the mental atmosphere of Bolshevik Russia. It is as easy for us—for me—to laugh at the ideological hair-splitting and Salvation Army jargon that have grown up round the Materialist creed as it was for Gibbon to ridicule the Monophysites and the Monotheites. Yet the purpose of these ideological and Christological controversies is the same, and an eminently comprehensible one: namely, to expand the provisions of a central creed so as to cover every possible contingency by a formula that shall be intelligible to the illiterate or the semi-literate mass. Where the parallel may possibly lose its force is in the nature of the spiritual force or faith behind the two religions.

The faith that inspired the earlier Russian revolutionaries was, as I have tried to explain, a conviction that the redemption of humanity must and could be attained through the mental and material advance of humanity in the mass. This was Lenin's faith. It may incorporate a kind of devil-worship. But judged by the measure of his devotion to his faith, Lenin was a great and noble man. I could not help asking myself, when in Russia, whether, now, this same faith was not giving place to external boastfulness and megalomania, a kind of hollow, inverted Fascism. One hears too much about the enthusiasm of YOUTH, in Russia as everywhere else. The very phrase is suspicious; it cloaks an emptiness; great movements cannot draw their force from supporters in a state of petrified immaturity. Russian YOUTH may feel itself pre-destined to dominate the globe. Drunk with titanic visions, it may hurl itself down mines and into factories. For the moment, the five-year plan provides a psychological safety-valve to this bursting intoxication, this class-chauvinism. But where is the original faith? What will sustain the young shock-brigades and komсомols of today twenty years hence, if the reward should not prove equal to their hope?

To these questions, to the question whether Materialism is destined to endure for centuries as a vital force, or to crumble away like a nerveless tooth, I can put no answer. Meanwhile, it seeks to reinforce its dominion with every device of jealous obscurantism and personal oppression known to the medieval Church or the Spanish Inquisition. The faith may survive the longer for such conditions, the social structure gain in strength. But art and culture must either die, as they died with Julian the Apostate, or assume a form as yet unknown, as they assumed in the Gothic cathedrals. So far, only darkness is descending, while the new light has not begun to shine. But the Dark Ages lasted four centuries. Must Russia wait as long, plunged in her scientific night?

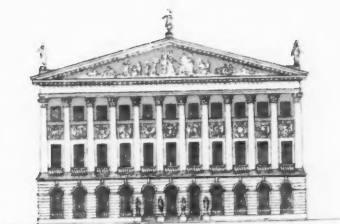
"At a certain stage of their development," wrote Marx,¹ "the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing production relationships, or, what is but a legal expression for the same thing, with the property relationships within which they have hitherto moved . . . A period of social revolution then begins. With the change in the economic foundation, the whole gigantic superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations, we must always distinguish between the material changes in the economic conditions of production . . . and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic, or philosophic, in short, ideological forms, in which human beings become conscious of this conflict and fight it out to an issue."

The italics are mine. They enshrine the kernel of Bolshevik truth:—thought, creative power, can have but one beginning and one end, one incentive and one purpose—the furtherance of the class-struggle.

¹ *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Chicago, 1904.

Education thus becomes a question of instilling into children (from the ages of six to sixty) the belief that the continuance of this struggle is the proper aim of all human beings and the particular aim of all good Russians. As far as general principles are concerned, a total amorality is inculcated by the most elementary copy-books. Spy on your neighbour and cherish the machine! is the motto of Russian childhood. In the towns, the principal churches are occupied by a litter of posters and photographs which remind one of a dismantled coffee-stall. Closer examination reveals a pictorial exposure of the iniquities and class-bias of all religions—Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant Christianity, the Sects, Judaism, Mohammedanism and Buddhism. The Calvinistic fury of Materialism can tolerate no rivals. Crowds of children trail round behind their teachers, as we see them at the Burlington House exhibitions, imbibing knowledge of the hard and fast line between the new Right and the new Wrong as laid down in these Anti-God Museums. The same line is apparent in the Press and in public entertainments. At the Press it becomes no Englishman to throw stones; I can only blush in guilty silence for Lord Rothermere and the correspondent of a certain newspaper at Riga. But on the Moscow wireless, during the English programme, I heard one thing that might have shocked even the adherents of General Dyer. The speaker was describing the industrial activity of Sverdlovsk, a town in the Urals once known as Ekaterinbourg. In their spare time, he said, smiling children and workers might be seen going in and out of the house of Ipatiev—now a museum—"where the family of Romanov met the fate it justly deserved." The man's voice, I thought, faltered as he spoke his silly text. And well it might. If this is how the Bolsheviks conduct their propaganda abroad, the world is safe from revolution for a long time. I should like to go to Sverdlovsk and see the children smiling in the death-cellar of those other children. The sight would bear noble witness to the power of the new faith, and also to that cowardly, hypocritical pretence of infallibility, mark of all religions, which must needs brazen out the most repulsive accidents.

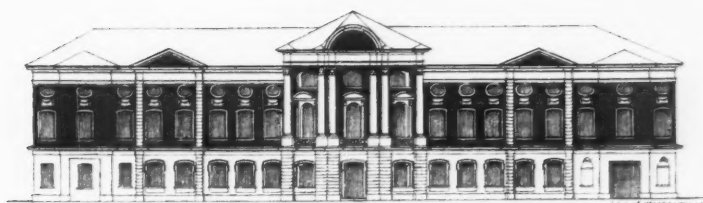
The atmospheric oppression of a land where the only truths are the class-war and the machine, and where all culture must be subservient to those ends, is alleviated by the novelty—one might even say eccentricity—that results. The air is mixed with laughing-gas. But it is a stifling air—how stifling I only realized on reaching Kiev, which preserves in some indefinable way its old university tradition of the humanities and allows one to breathe normally again. Not that I was unhappy in Russia. I can truthfully say that in no foreign country have I ever enjoyed myself so positively, been so sheltered from boredom, or felt such regret at departure. But this was partly due, I must confess, to the pleasant feeling of pugnacity that woke in my bosom. The system is intended for the world—that is



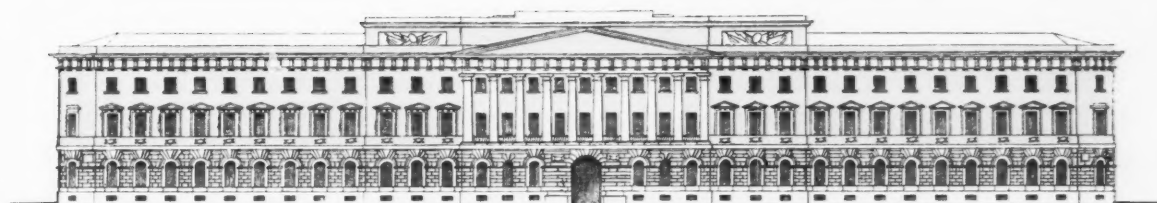
Orange. The Museum,
Roumianzov.



Green. One of the façades of the
Riding School.



Blue. The Ministry of Justice.



Yellow. The Pavlovsky Barracks.

EXAMPLES OF THE COLOURS USED ON THE BUILDINGS OF LENINGRAD at the end
of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, taken from contemporary
hand-painted plans.

PLATE III. May 1932.

clear from the start. Try your damned religion on me, I felt, and you'll get as good as you give! And so they did, now and then. Yet I could not but respect persons so deeply engaged in a definite purpose and so homogeneously subscribing, with heart or lip, to a definite belief. Such fixity was hardly to be despised by a member of that nation whose chosen patriots are Noel Coward and Winston Churchill. It was rather to be envied.

My first real consciousness of the Great Untruth was brought to the surface by a Beethoven concert conducted by Oscar Fried in the Moscow Conservatorium. They were playing the Pastoral Symphony. It was not a bad performance, though the instruments lacked tone. When it was at an end, I looked up and remembered where I was. And then, suddenly, it came to me that here—not in capitalism, nor in Christianity, but here on the concert platform in these tattered scores—was the enemy that Materialism can never conquer and that must ultimately and inevitably conquer Materialism. It seemed to me that to allow such a performance to take place in public was simply an act of quixotic folly on the part of the authorities. In theory, no doubt, the Pastoral Symphony provides exemplary illustration of the class-war in rural Austria. In practice . . . I turned my attention to the audience and read, or thought I read, my own thoughts in their faces. Only a group of shock-brigaders, young hierarchs in tall boots, looked sullen, as indeed it was their duty to do. They would have explained to me, had I reproached them for their attendance, that music, above all arts, conduces to the socialization of emotion. This means, in ordinary language, that it moves a lot of people at once. But if I had asked them how it is that certain compositions wield this invaluable power in a greater degree than others, or whether the emotion produced by them is not the outcome of a highly incorrect revelation of abstract beauty, I do not know what they would have replied. The functions of art are one thing. Its creation and effect are another. Either art must be proscribed in its entirety, as St. Clement of Alexandria recommended; or, if its effect is considered beneficial to the general mass, then the individual must be allowed free play with abstractions in order to create it. The learned doctors of Materialism argue that a class-war for the redemption of humanity should be abstraction enough for any artist. This may be so. A spontaneous culture may spring from the soil of mass-betterment. But I could see no signs of it. When I asked for any, they could only answer with Christ: "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it." This was disappointing. Still, remembering THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, I persisted in my search.

At Morgan's instance, I went to see the two most recent sound-films made in the Russian studios. Russian films of the revolutionary or epic period have aroused great hopes. These, depicting the present

period of construction, proved by contrast somewhat disappointing.

The first was called *Sniper*. It opened with a regiment of British troops in kilts made of duster-cloth being cheered off to the front to the strains of "Tipperrarr-ee," which tune, I afterwards learnt, they had been taught to sing by Morgan. A confusing succession of incidents on various fronts followed, during which No-man's Land was suddenly transformed into a maize-field, in order that harvesting women, whom the German Army was gallantly assisting in their labours, might be shot down by the Allied guns. Finally the scene changed to the new Russia, in which all the workers but one of a certain factory devoted their leisure hours to rifle-practice. This one, a feckless youth, maundered about with a tennis racquet; until one day the capitalist invasion began, and the tennis-racquet proved of little service in defending either its owner's person or his fatherland. I was reminded of those ridiculous British productions sponsored by the Empire Marketing Board to promote imperial fellowship. And I must say, in all justice, that even the Moscow Press was loud in its denunciations of such crudity.

The other film, on the other hand, had been acclaimed as a national triumph, and has presumably obtained popularity abroad, since I afterwards found it showing in Constantinople. The photography was generally good and in parts excellent. Its title may be rendered as *The Way into Life*.

The theme was the redemption of those homeless children that have grown up like animals and have infested Russia since the great famine. They are shown at first as thieves and thugs. Then, while sleeping in a cellar, they are rounded up and transported to a deserted church in the country which they turn into a workshop. Their gradual transformation into useful members of society is effected by a kind of scoutmaster who seeks to inculcate into them the public-school sense of honour, and is materially assisted in this admirable work by the hero of the film, a worthy Tartar boy named Mustafa. But evil influences persist. While the scoutmaster is away, a disaffected section of the boys, despite the opposition of those led by Mustafa, breaks all the machines. The scoutmaster, on return, cannot conceal his pain, but instead of reproaches, he produces a toy-train from a brown-paper parcel. This he sets going on toy rails; and, inspired by its example, they start to build a real railway. Meanwhile the disaffected section has discovered a log-hut in the woods where prostitutes congregate and vodka circulates freely. To this horrible resort they lure Mustafa and his disciples, now clad in smart lounge suits. But when the orgy is at its height, the latter, at a sign from their leader, draw revolvers, shoot up a number of strange but repulsive men, and bind the evil women, who are now in a state of blubbering dishevelment. By now the line is finished. The night before the opening Mustafa goes down it on a trolley, singing a Tartar song as the dawn breaks, the

birds begin to chirp, and the bull-frogs to croak. But an enemy lies in wait; the trolley is upset and Mustafa stabbed to death. After some delay the ceremonial first train, manned by the now fully reclaimed boys, starts its opening journey without him. Then they find his body, and placing it reverently on the front of the engine, steam into the terminus of a small town, where rejoicing at once gives way to grief. In real life, I am glad to say, Mustafa is still with us. Moscow now realizes that he is human after all, and that he is more broad-minded than the film would have us believe.

There were moments in this film of real emotional solemnity, such as that of the Tartar song at dawn. But for me these were entirely overshadowed by the didactic unreality of the whole story, and by the catechism in Right and Wrong which the audience was obliged to answer in order to keep abreast of the plot. It was the atmosphere of *Eric, or Little by Little* and the *Fairchild Family* over again, with the same fascination of the contemporary social document. I would have given half my time in Russia to have read into the hearts of my fellow-spectators, and to have discovered whether this crude anti-thesis of Materialist values had inspired them with real emotional piety, or had rendered their entertainment, as it had mine, just a little tedious.

It would be possible to continue indefinitely the list of experiences which went to prove how utterly impossible, and, from the Materialist point of view, undesirable, it is that any form of disinterested, non-political, or non-economic culture should ever flourish on the soil of modern Russia. But there came to my notice one final instance which revealed, more plainly and more grotesquely than anything else, the mendacious and futile obscurantism to which the new religion finds it necessary to resort in its own self-defence. There hangs in Moscow one of the finest and most representative collections of modern French pictures that has ever been assembled. Over the entrances of each room are printed notices, which are designed to assist the appreciation of less sophisticated visitors. In appending a selection from these notices, I withhold comment that would be impertinent to the intelligence of the English reader and offensive to my Russian friends:—

MONET: Age of transition from capitalism to imperialism. Taste of the industrial bourgeoisie.

CEZANNE: Age of the preliminary period of imperialism. Taste of the industrial bourgeoisie.

PISSARRO AND SISELEY: Age of the preliminary period of imperialism. Taste of the industrial bourgeoisie.

GAUGUIN: Taste of the rentier.

CROSS AND SIGNAC: Taste of the lower and middle bourgeoisie under the influence of the larger industrial bourgeoisie.

VAN GOGH: Taste of the small bourgeoisie.

MATISSE: Age of distorted imperialism. Taste of the rentier.

Politics & the Individual

While the doctrine of Materialism ascribes all artistic creation to the genius of the mass and epoch rather than to that of the individual, it must perforce admit that the concrete fruits of such creation do owe their shape to some effort on the part of the individual, even though his proper function is only to interpret and organize the taste and emotions of the mass and epoch; and that the successful fulfilment of this function, impersonal though it be, requires of the individual a degree of concentration and thought which distinguishes him from the common herd and thus postulates the existence of an intelligentsia. "We workers," say the good party-men, "will create our own intelligentsia." So they may do—though how, neither they nor I can explain. But whatever its origins, this intelligentsia will constitute a different class from that of the "workers and peasants," and as such a suspect class. All disinterested thought, such as we regard as the first condition of cultural development, is rendered impossible in Russia by the jealousy of the prevailing religion. But even those of the intelligentsia who sincerely subscribe to that religion—"one must believe in it, or one cannot live here," said the son of a former landowner, now an engineer, to me—even they are subject to a system of bewildering impediments which makes the foreign observer wonder how their task can be adequately performed and whether anything truly inventive can ever result from their efforts. I would emphasize the fact that I am writing here, not of the disgruntled dispossessed, but of those who are honestly desirous of working for and with the new system, but whose vocations necessarily place them in the intellectual class.

Sixty years ago one of Dostoevsky's characters spoke as follows concerning the social system adumbrated by another:—

One thing in his book is good, the idea of espionage. In his idea every member of the society spies on the others, and is bound to inform against them when necessary. All are slaves and equal in their slavery . . . First of all, the level of education, science, and innate natural talent falls. A high intellectual level is possible only to superior talents; but we have no need of superior talents. Superior talents have always seized power for themselves and led to despotism. Men of talent cannot help becoming despots, they have always done more harm than good; therefore they are driven out or put to death.¹

This prophecy is somewhat exaggerated, since Materialism has great need of superior talents and its exponents admit the fact. But it contains much that the visitor to Russia can recognize.

Those less fortunate observers, who are obliged to commit themselves entirely to



THE NEW HEADQUARTERS OF THE G.P.U. in the Lubianka, Moscow.

the excellent facilities offered by the Russian tourist agency, remain completely oblivious to that unique state of affairs which most clearly distinguishes the lives of Russian humanity from those led by humanity in any other part of the globe. This state of affairs consists in the universal, all-pervasive practice of espionage and suspicion conducted among all grades of the Materialist society. I heard it said that one in every fourteen persons in the whole of Russia is in some way or other an agent of the secret police. Whether this is true, I do not know. But my own short experience revealed to me that even the boldest flights of fiction conceived by the late Mr. Edgar Wallace had visualized nothing to compare with the reality of those excitements which the Russian people are daily privileged to enjoy. Now that I am back in England, no report circulated by the egregious Rothermere seems too preposterous to believe, even though, in nine cases out of ten, I do not believe it. At times, during my visit, I began to doubt my own sanity; but never for long; some conversation with those who had actually experienced the ordeals of Russian citizenship or residence always intervened to restore it. Plotters, saboteurs, informers, kulaks, assassins, counter-revolutionaries, and the ever-renascent bourgeoisie, native or foreign, lurk behind every window, playing their assigned rôles with the ineradicable malignancy of the Vauriens in Elmer Rice's *Purulia*. Against these vile creatures, the Communist Paragonians, members of that unspotted élite, the party proper,¹ are engaged in ceaseless warfare. It is a kind of film-land, where all the types are prearranged and Goodness shines with perpetual brightness in its everlasting victory over Sin. Even prostitutes, being forbidden a trade-union, cannot flourish.

¹ This body numbers only about two millions.

The secret police are known as the G.P.U. This is pronounced Gaypayooh—but only by foreigners. By Russians the term is never uttered. They may sometimes talk in whispers of the "three-letter men." But generally they prefer not to mention them at all. It became one of my favourite amusements to enunciate the fatal syllables in public places, in order to watch the tremor of surprise and apprehension elicited from every one within hearing. On one occasion, it happened that my companion and I had inadvertently settled ourselves in a railway compartment reserved for the State couriers. The first of them to arrive naturally expostulated, and on seeing that we did not understand, pointed to the red tabs on his collar. "Oh!" I said, comprehending, "you're a G.P.U. man, are you?" At which even he, who was, started as though I had stuck a pin into his behind. He proved afterwards a Crichton of courtesy and assistance, even getting out of his bed at three in the morning to see us comfortably off the train.

But there is another and repulsive side to the picture. It must be remembered that the majority of those who enjoy the real power in Russia today are men who spent their early lives hunted from pillar to post by the Tsarist Okhrana; they were imprisoned; they were sent to Siberia; and the old spirit of suspicion and *revanche* still lives in them. Lenin and Trotsky were different. They, too, may have harboured these feelings. But their constructive energy outweighed them. Today Russia is ruled by men of meaner mould, men whose twisted outlook infects the whole Soviet Union with a spirit of malice and suspicion. The whole air is poisoned by this evil. Every man lives in fear of his neighbour. Even the school-children are admonished, in the books from which they learn to read, to train themselves as spies in their own villages. I do not exaggerate. I talked with persons who had been recently summoned to cross-examination by the G.P.U. and with persons who had recently been the victims of their midnight raids. I learned from first-hand of their cold chamber. I found that distinguished scholars whom I had wished to meet had "disappeared." I experienced personally their postal inquisition. Yet such information was acquired purely by chance in the most casual fashion. I was far too interested in the permanent Russia as it was and ever shall be, and was enjoying myself far too much there, to go nosing about in search of evil. Finally, after the Foreign Office had begged me to extend my stay, some unknown authority thought it better not to extend my visa. But then, I thought, in a country that celebrates its October Revolution in November, one should not be surprised that the Foreign Office cannot grant its own visas.

It is none of my purpose or business to censure the government of Russia and the priesthood of Materialism for maintaining a body of agents and police such as have always been found necessary to uphold the government and religion of that country. It may

¹ From *The Possessed*, quoted by René Fülöp-Miller in *The Mind and Face of Bolshevism*.



THE HOUSE OF INDUSTRY AT HARKOV. The plan of this building is eventually to form a complete circle; about one-fifth of the circumference is now built. The immense height of the building's twenty-two storeys, in conjunction with the enormous area of unoccupied ground, bespeaks a kind of megalomania. Nevertheless, viewed from a distance, it is undeniably grand and impressive.

PLATE IV. *May 1932.*





reasonably be assumed, from the historical evidence, that the Russian people and those who comprise the rest of the Union can only be governed by a despotism based on espionage, and that some such body must always be inherent in the Russian State. I am simply concerned to note the mental effect of such a system, whose rigour has been steadily increasing during the last five years, and whose brunt is borne mainly by the intellectual class, not necessarily on account of subversive activity, but simply because it is the intellectual class. It is they who are pilloried as the public enemies in theatrical trials; it is they whose every word and action is circumscribed by terror of the "ideologically incorrect," whose avocations are supervised by semi-literate youths chosen from the party ranks, whose numbers are continually depleted to swell the Ural camps, and whose families suffer from cruel uncertainty. Such measures *may* be necessary; there may be enemies lurking in their midst; considering the difficulties under which they work, I should be surprised if there were not; these things again are not for me to affirm. But what I will affirm, and what I would beg the reader to share with me, is my contempt for those foreign intellectuals, and particularly those English ones, who, while finding in Russia the exemplar of social and economic planning, the climax of constructive politics, the paradise of YOUTH—in short, the model towards which all truly progressive persons must look for world redemption—are so intoxicated with admiration that they can spare no word of sympathy for their fellow-intellectuals, the men in Russia likest to themselves, for whom there is no place or hope under the system they so ardently covet. That this system would immediately, on attaining power, annihilate these miserable hypocrites, these hypnotees of every windblown theory, these bastards by uplift out of comfortable income, is the one satisfaction I could derive from its introduction into England. These Fabian ghosts, these liberal politicians, socialist editors and female peace-promoters, are the very people who anathematize without cease the tyranny of Mussolini and his treatment of the Italian intellectual. But in Russia, where they are building not only socialism but Fordson tractors, the treatment of the intellectual does not matter: what counts freedom of thought or scholarship or individual creation beside the regeneration of the Great Unwashed? Very little, I dare say. And as little as these things count in that new world, just so little in this old one count those men whose inheritance they are and who renounce them for a mess of Bolshevik pottage. Let us rather have amongst us the red revolutionary who tries to seduce the troops and goes to prison for it, than these Russophil enthusiasts who acclaim the downfall of their own kind as the ultimate triumph of civilization.

Despite its cruelty, it is possible to argue that the old intellectual has deserved his fate, on account of his procrastination of soul and his slowness to ally himself with

THE ARCHITECTURAL GROUP: ADMINISTRATION OLD AND NEW



THE KREMLIN, MOSCOW.



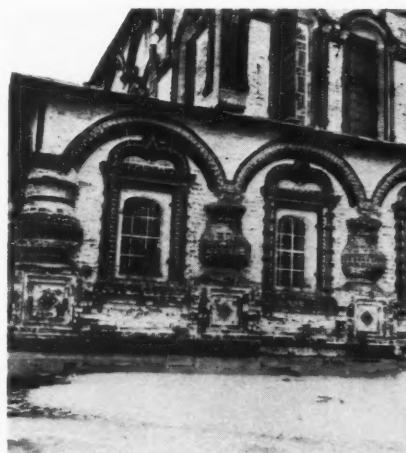
THE HOUSE OF INDUSTRY AT HARKOV.

the new movement when it rose to power. But it is not only the old intellectual that falls under the ban of prevalent suspicion. The new—the inventors, planners, engineers, specialists, editors, architects, film-producers and their like, all the prophets of the modern age—suffer from the same intolerable lack of freedom. In 1930 the campaign waged against them by the G.P.U. reached such a pitch of fury that the authorities began to count the cost. Rykov produced figures to show how the five-year plan was being hampered by this insensate policy. Until at last Stalin, who is a realist when the truth penetrates to him, called off the terror. The G.P.U., it was felt, was getting too big for its boots, with the result that administrative measures were taken to diminish its power. At the same time the salaries of the specialists were increased. Certainly those few that I came across did not seem at all badly paid by Russian

standards. But the evil was done and will take more than these half-measures to undo. Maurice Hindus asks: "Can Russia make man as inventive, as creative, as constructive as a capitalist regime which lays at the feet of a Ford, a Rosenswald, a Woolworth, a Rockefeller, all the rewards that this earth can afford? This is the crux of the Communist challenge to Capitalism."¹ In my opinion, this is not the crux; the national enthusiasm for the work in hand seemed, among nearly all those I met—even among such minor actors in the drama as archaeologists and museum curators—to provide its own reward. Where the crux lies now in 1932 (Hindus wrote at the beginning of 1929) and where the whole system is threatened with breakdown, is in the terror of responsibility which has resulted from the preposterous campaign against the

¹ *Humanity Uprooted*, p. 82.

DETAILS OF RUSSIAN TASTE



Left. ORNAMENTAL BRICKWORK from the Church of St. John Chrysostom, Korovniko, Yaroslavl. Right. An angle of A MOSCOW WORKERS' CLUB.

intellectual of the last three years. One of the foreign specialists in the country assured me that no sooner did he leave his office on one of those frequent trips to which his business called him, than his whole department absolutely ceased to function owing to the positive physical fear that now accompanies the taking of any decision whatsoever. Certainly, he said, there were other difficulties in the way of the five-year plan; these difficulties, however, could be overcome. But in this doctrinal and actual proscription of the intellectual class he saw an insuperable obstacle to the plan's success. And he prophesied that unless the psychological effects of the last three years were removed—unless in fact the class-war should cease—the immense factories now in construction would either have to be placed under the management of foreigners or bankrupt the State by their total failure.

In concluding this very incomplete account of the psychological atmosphere in which the Russian intellectual moves and attempts to have his being, I would mention two last factors whose significance is by no means negligible and which serve, in some degree, to counterbalance the disabilities enumerated above. These are Russian nationalism and the paradox involved in the Russian worship of the machine.

The Allied intervention in Russia after the war was over was the most futile, most stupidly conducted, and most subsequently harmful adventure that modern history can show. The Materialist philosophy had postulated at least a brand of internationalism, even if that brand meant only loyalty to international socialism. Owing to the intervention and the attitude that the greater part of the foreign Press has inherited from it, there has resulted in Russia a mental isolation from the rest of the world which was at first merely negative, but which is now crystallizing into a positive national egotism of the most pronounced kind. Owing to the general impossibility of travel, of corresponding with foreigners, or of obtaining foreign books, both the educated and the semi-educated Russian honestly believe that in themselves alone is concentrated all the really progressive thought of the whole world; in which belief they are confirmed by the agreement of the foreign enthusiasts. This state of affairs, though it hardly conduces to a profitable use of the world's intellectual resources, sustains the Russian intellectual in his present difficulties by placing him, at least in his own estimate, in the van of human affairs. His vanity, moreover, is flattered by the enormous curiosity which his country continues to arouse. It is not unpleasant to be regarded either as a bogey or as a saviour, but never as a nonentity, by virtue of one's very nationality. In addition, this mental chauvinism is reinforced by continual war-scars. The reader may find it hard to believe, but I can assure him that I emerged into the streets of Moscow one morning to discover the hitherto sober trams adorned with posters calling on the wise citizen to buy his gas-mask before

it was too late. Malicious rumour said that the army stocks having been found to be defective, it was now sought to unload these essential household requisites on the civil population at seven roubles apiece. Be this as it may, no Russian seemed to think the admonition absurd. "What about the Intervention?" came the inevitable retort. But the real explanation is, that deep down in the hearts of the population endures an older patriotism than that inculcated by Materialism—a patriotism which must always be associated with "Holy Russia." I was told of a certain evening at the opera about a year ago, when it happened that the principal singer had ended his part, the climax of the piece, with the words: "GOD SHALL SAVE RUSSIA." Whereupon the audience rose to its feet in the stress of its collective emotion and cheered away its feelings till the roof shook. It was not the voice of the old Christians that cheered, but the voice of Russia, of the Russia that has stood and shall stand till the world's end.

The paradox involved in the prevailing adoration of the machine lies in the fact that this cult should find its most devoted adherents in the most unmechanical country in the world. In the early days of this century, when Russian literature and Russian ballet swept over Western Europe, an idea grew up that the average Russian lived in a romantic Slav twilight, a cherry orchard of his own incapacity, where everything was excused by wringing of hands and a reference to temperament. Whether this ever was so, I doubt; it certainly is no longer. Russian incompetence of today is something cosmic, almost brutal, scorning excuse and seeking none. Should circumstances happen to obtrude it on the foreigner, and he happen to remark on it, this is considered an exhibition of bad form on both sides. During one week in the Ukraine, my companion and I experienced no less than five railway mishaps, in one of which—though fortunately it happened to the train in front—nineteen people were killed and over forty injured. Our eyebrows rose; finally, when the memory of this tragic accident had evaporated, we broke into uncontrollable laughter, and teased our guide till the poor man almost lost his faith in Progress. Was this the country of the five-year plan, we asked, rejoicing in our ribald scepticism. But our inquiry lacked generosity. For those five mishaps explained precisely why Russia is the country of the five-year plan.

On another occasion, when there was no boat waiting at the end of the journey, I discussed the question more calmly with an intelligent young Jew, who fully understood my detestation for the machine-cult. He replied that to appreciate its meaning, I must realize what the Russians had gone through during the period of Civil War, the Intervention, and the great famine. When the first party of foreign tourists reached Lenin-grad in 1926, forty cars were needed to transport them to Tsarskoe-Selo. Forty pre-war cars were collected, and twenty-five more to act as a reserve. Even so,

that party failed to arrive at Tsarskoe-Selo, which is about twenty miles away. He said that when, some time later, the first new cars that had been seen since the Revolution arrived from America, crowds followed them in the streets in order to touch them, as though a Cardinal were in progress with his ring outstretched. He himself had been among them. And though he smiled at the memory, he still treasured the rapture he had experienced on seeing the first Russian-made lorry actually in movement. Then he went on to speak of his father, a poor nep-man, who had been taken away and never seen again after the reversal of the New Economic Policy. What a restricted life he had led, immersed in his family and his little business! Now here was his son, my friend, partaking in great events, mover in a great world force—though only a tourist guide. He was happy; I have never known anyone more content. Yet this youth, who had placed a sacramental finger on the first Ford-car, was as impatient and active as myself in climbing about rickety scaffolds in the biting cold to study the fourteenth-century frescoes of the Novgorod churches.

Those who see fit, like I did and still do, to loose their gibes at the Russian cult of the machine, should recall England of the 'forties and 'fifties. Let them read Macaulay's panegyric on his country's factories and railroads, couched in the language of an artist before the Parthenon; and having read, let them envy rather than despise a country that can still enjoy, in the twentieth century, that blend of assurance, novelty and excitement, which produced our own greatness in the nineteenth. We have had time to profit by the mistakes of our native materialists, our Victorian rationalists and economists. So perhaps will the Russians also profit when the time comes. Meanwhile the air is fresh and stimulating. The intelligentsia of Russia, both the survivors of the old and the children of the new ages, are victims of every disadvantage that dogmatism and jealousy can invent. But they escape, notwithstanding the one supreme disadvantage that can afflict an intelligentsia—that of lethargy and complacency.

Last, and most precious of possessions, they have still their own country. They have escaped the desperate fate of the *émigrés*. I met one lady in Moscow, the avowed survivor of an old Russian family, who had recently married a foreigner, and, having obtained his nationality, was able to leave Russia and visit her friends of the old days in Paris and Riga. This lady has suffered much from the Bolsheviks—particularly during the last two or three years. But she assured me that after experience of the mental Bourbonism by which her old friends sustain their lingering hopes of a restoration, she was glad to think she still lived amid the fears and discomforts of Red Moscow. Because she was still a patriot, they ended by regarding her as a traitor. It is this patriotism which, above all else, makes the lives of educated men and women in Russia today still worth living.

CHURCHES OF SEVEN CENTURIES SHOWING THE TRANSFORMATION OF EUROPEAN THEMES INTO RUSSIA



The Cathedral of St. Sophia at Veliki Novgorod, 1045.



The Church of Nereditsi, twelfth century.



The top of Uspensky Cathedral, 1475-9, in the Kremlin.



The Church of Basil Blajenny, by the Russian architects Barma and Postnik, 1555-60.



The Church of St. John Chrysostom at Korovniko, near Yaroslavl, 1654.



The Church of St. John the Baptist at Tolkovo, near Yaroslavl, 1687.

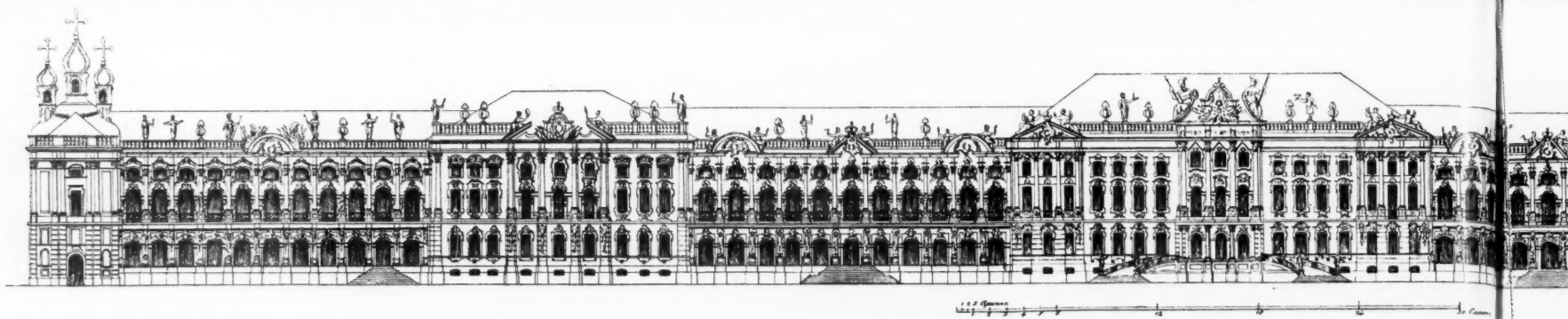


A small Baroque church in the Troitzky Lavra at Sergievo near Moscow. Early eighteenth century.

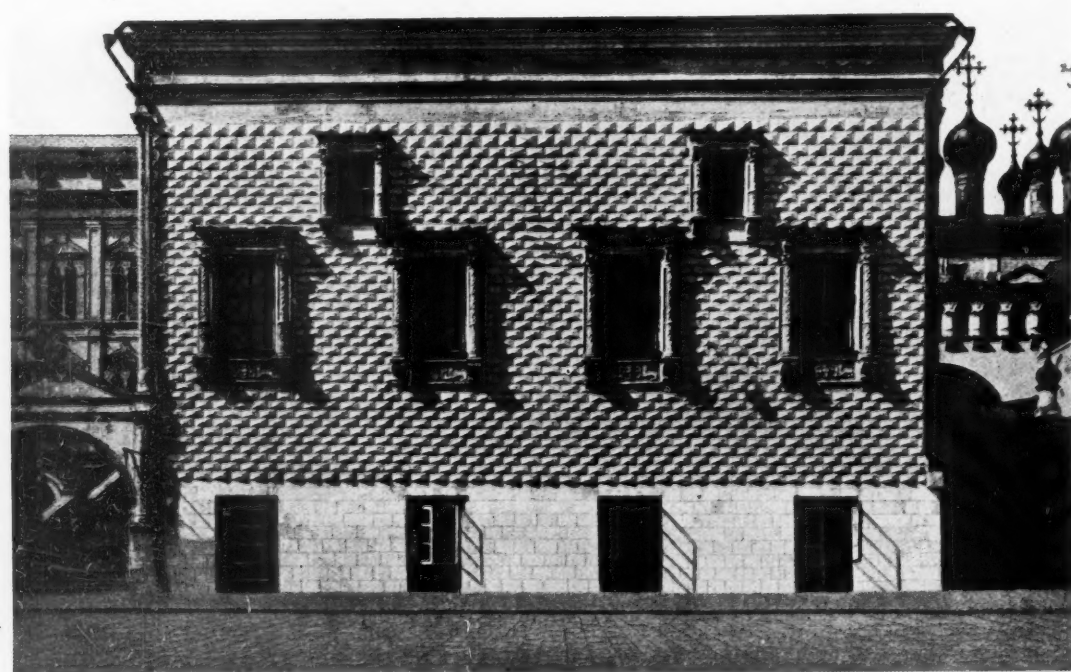
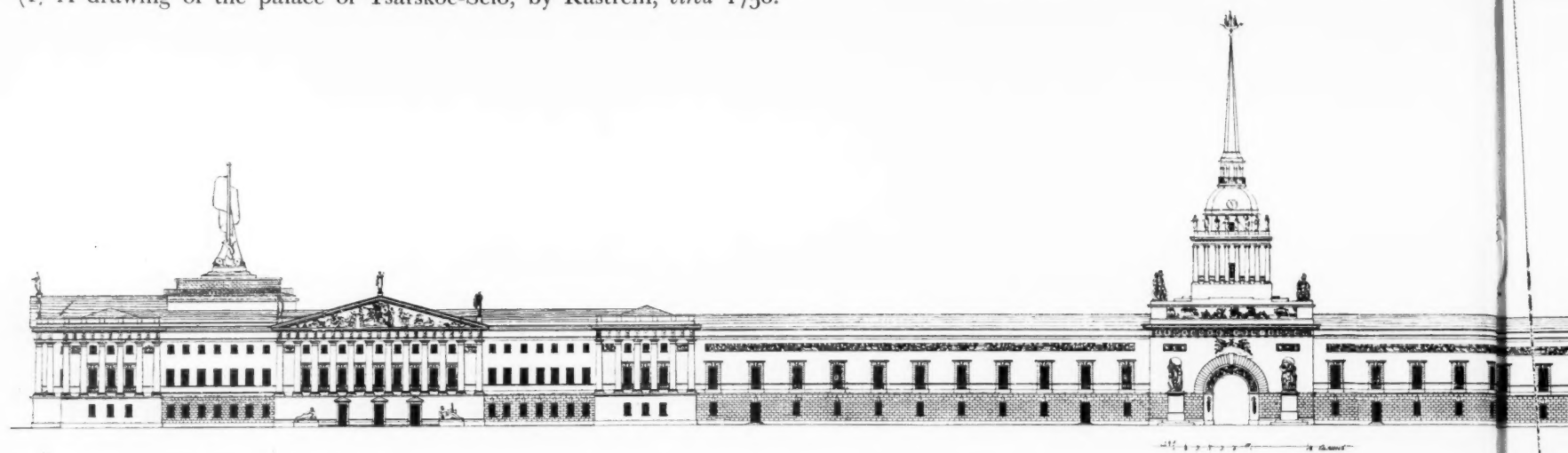


The Cathedral of St. Isaac, Leningrad, by Montferrand, 1817-58.

OFFICIAL ARCHITECTURE: THE RUSSIFICATION OF ITALIAN STYLES FROM



(I) A drawing of the palace of Tsarskoe-Selo, by Rastrelli, *circa* 1750.



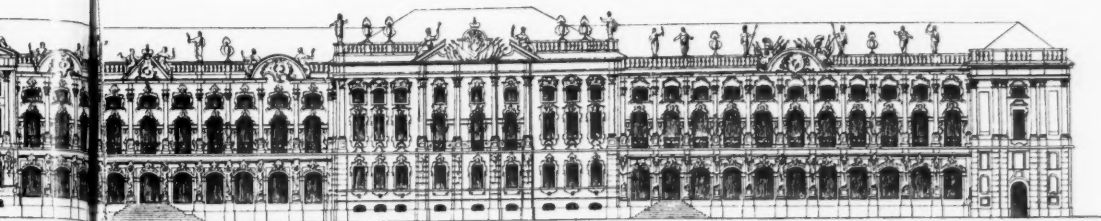
III



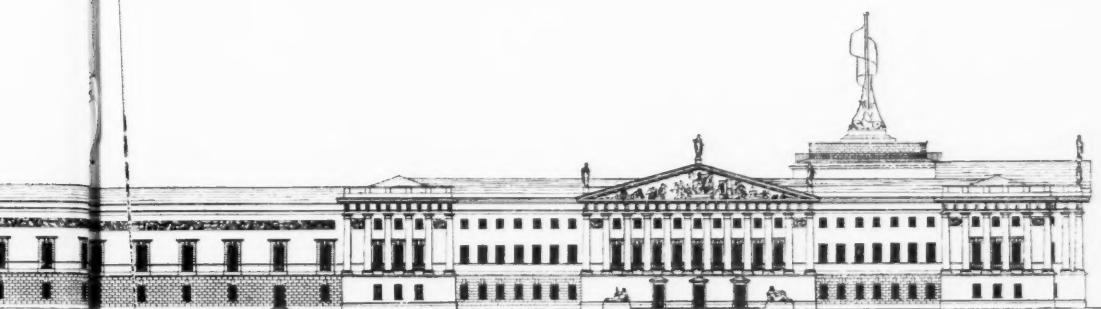
IV

(III) and (IV) The Granovitaya Palata in the Kremlin at Moscow, 1487-91. This palace was built by two Italians named Marco Ruffo and Pietro Antonio Solario, and shows in the ornament and spacing of its windows how quickly this early generation of specialists adapted itself to the Russian æsthetic.

YLES FROM THE XVTH TO THE XIXTH CENTURIES.



I



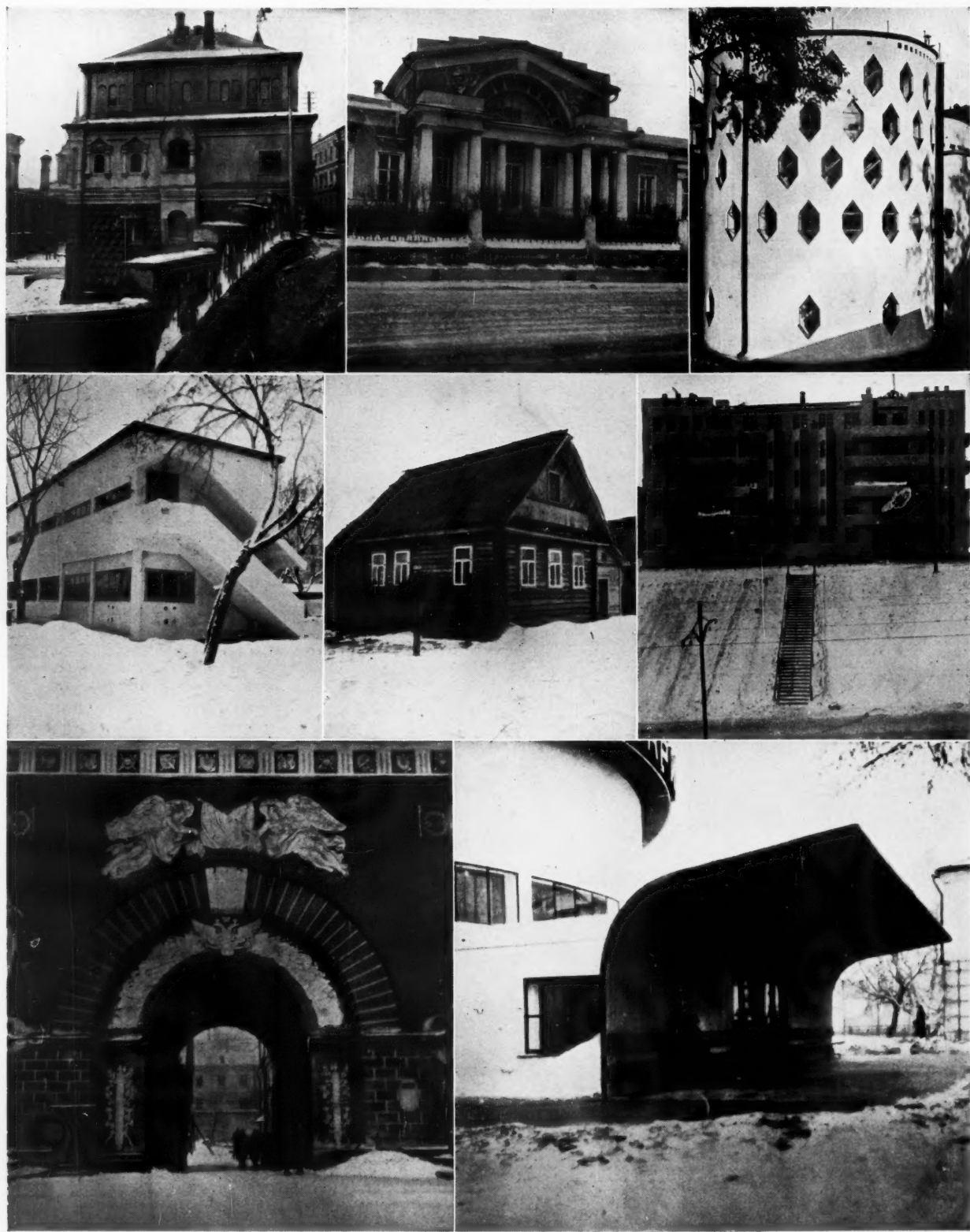
II



V

(II) and (V) The Admiralty. *Architect*, Sakharov, 1823. The building is 847 yards in length and the tower is 229 ft. high. The general colour is the old Government tawny yellow, with the detail and pillars in white.

DWELLINGS & PORCHES THROUGH FOUR CENTURIES



Top (*left*), a Russian boyar house in Moscow, seventeenth century, reconstructed in 1858; (*centre*), a town house of the Empire style in Moscow; (*right*), an experimental house in Moscow by Melnikov. Middle (*left*), a house by Ginsborg adjoining his block of flats; (*centre*), a peasant's house in the Pskov district. Note the trusses

of hay piled up against the wall to keep out the wind; (*right*), workers' tenements at Harkov. Bottom (*left*), the main entrance to the Admiralty by Sakharov, 1823; (*right*), porch to the planetarium, a type which is being widely adopted. This is painted a dark daffodil yellow underneath. The architect is Barstch.



ENTRANCE TO THE MORTUARY next to the Hospital of Holy Mary Magdalen at Leningrad. Designed by Plavov, 1835-38.

The Russian Aesthetic

The regular reader of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW may possibly feel that, wide as his interests may be, there ought to be some limits to editorial licence; and that for a mere contributor to lure him into this maze of political and even economic considerations is nothing less than an abuse of the subscriber's confidence. If he feels thus, I must ask him to remember that modern Russian culture is still in its embryonic stage; that the main interest it presents is rather as a field for prophecy than as one of completed achievement; that even the embryo is still obscured by the shell of a still mortifying past on which has fastened the inevitable mushroom-crop of contemporary plagiarisms; and that if the foreign observer is to discern any sign of original life, he must seek it primarily in a study of the individual

educated Russian and of the evolution which he is now undergoing. Of that evolution, of its attendant pains and mental voltage, I have attempted some slight account in order that the shipwrecked reader, when at last he makes harbour in the specifically architectural comment of M. Lubetkin, may be better able to navigate its ideological channels, and may also be able to conceive a day when Bolshevist Russia will contribute something more aesthetically valuable to the art of building than the banal mediocrity displayed in most of the accompanying illustrations of modern architecture. On my first reaching Russia and learning how meagre, hitherto, had proved the architectural genius of Materialism, I had written to the Editor of this journal saying that I found it difficult

to concentrate my attention on buildings that might cause an ephemeral surprise in the suburbs of Wolverhampton, when my eyes were blinded by such superb exercises in human imagination as the Kremlin and Basil Blajenny. My correspondent, amidst whose constellation of natural virtues caution has never so much as twinkled, replied in the vein of Miss Sylvia Chen that the Kremlin had already been written about for centuries; that of course he left everything to me who was on the spot; but that what he really wanted was neither modern architecture nor old, but my "reactions to Bolshevism." These, then, he has got, and has passed on, for what they are worth, to that small but select public whose docility he has learned to rely on. The "reactions" in question were concerned mainly with the psychological environment of the Russian individual, and as such they have been set down; their application is intended to embrace the

engineer and the farm manager as well as the artist. But there remains a more impersonal factor which, for architecture in particular, must play a decisive part in the future development of Bolshevik taste, and on which all prophecy in that respect must be based. This is the consistently unique tradition of colour and form displayed by all the visual arts in Russia from the eleventh century onward. Architecture, being the most functional of the arts, is essentially the art of the mass. And it is in architecture that this tradition must find life again or prove itself sterile and the culture of the Revolution sterile with it.

The Russian æsthetic is often called, by the glib classifiers of Western Europe, an Oriental one. Certainly it may have borrowed a motive here and there from the Moslems and Chinese. But its essential spirit is a purely Russian one. And such superficial resemblances as its architecture or painting may display to those of the East, derive from the fact that each has had the same æsthetic problems to overcome. These lie, as always, in the landscape. The Russian scene provides neither form, nor colour, nor shadows of rich texture. Apprehensible form, gay colour, and rich magnificence, must therefore be supplied by art. But the Russian landscape is not merely negative. Its illimitable spaces and skies, its limpid summer clouds, and its precise outline of detail against the winter snow, all determine the manner in which its deficiencies shall be filled by artifice. It holds a latent power which likes to speak in terms of the grandiose and monumental. No difficulty is too great, no scheme too vast, for this power to overcome. It plans cities on a scale commensurate with the huge rolling rivers on whose banks they stand. At the same time it employs the poetry of field and village and the peasant love of fantasy. Somehow, by some genius of the people, æsthetic order results: buildings are grouped as though on a perpetual backcloth; paintings are composed; the domestic arts are sane. The lyrical note is absent; there is none of that intimate perfection which reaches to the hidden places of the mind. All is open, fully apparent on a glance, blatant even; there is no hidden measure, no economy of means; yet all is within bounds and betrays a love of well-being which is not dissimilar from that of our own prosaic isle.

For his means of architectural expression, the Russian has always borrowed the grammar of some foreign tongue and made it the basis of a language entirely his own. The earliest was Byzantine, which he enlarged, as he has enlarged everything, heightening the churches out of all recognition and replacing the neat lead vaults and saucer-domes of the Greeks with helmets and onions. These in time he gilded, coloured, and patterned; he grouped them at different levels; he multiplied them into forests or inflated them singly to overwhelming dimensions. At length came the Tartar invasion. Round these churches grew walls and towers of Tartar pattern, to form the local Kremlins and fortified monasteries.

Then the Italians arrived, only to become more Russian than the Russians themselves. Venetian Gothic, classical pillarettes and arcades, machicolated balconies, elaborate rustications, and a wealth of faience, all came to swell the Russian harmony, brought by foreigners whose privileged position and adoption of Russian aims made them the counterpart of the specialists employed under the Five-Year Plan today. Released from the severe canons of their own countries, they threw themselves headlong into the Russian love of fantasy; they planned and they built with an emphatic eccentricity which is rendered none the less coherent by virtue of its very size. Far from being stifled by this foreign invasion the native motives, the gay colours and ubiquitous bulbosities,



The gigantic MONUMENT TO PETER THE GREAT, by Falconet, 1775. The pedestal consists of a single granite block weighing 1,600 tons.

flowered anew like plants in a freshly manured garden. The eleventh-century cathedral of St. Sophia at Veliki Novgorod, built under the direct influence of the Greeks, has less of a specifically Russian character than the riotous and variegated churches of the sixteenth century, built after two centuries of Italian predominance, such as those of Yaroslavl or the Moscow suburbs.

With the reign of Peter the Great, whom Lenin acclaimed as a spiritual ancestor, a new and more systematic process of Westernization began. Churches and the dwellings of the nobility became baroque. Rastrelli, the architect of the Winter Palace and Tsarskoe-Selo, covered Russia with stupendous belfries, towering accretions of arches and pillars, but as intrinsically Russian as the monasteries in which they stand. At length followed the Empire style which the Russians, though still depending on Italians for their original designs, made particularly their own. The ruthless interminability of their official buildings grew till the eye cannot grasp them. A government colour-wash was invented, a flat tawny yellow, against which pillars and ornament stand out in white. Towers persisted, great spikes such as that of the Leningrad Admiralty, in which the taste that built the Kremlin

speaks again in the language of a later age. At the same time a charming domestic architecture grew up, massive and low-storeyed, as though the domestic architects were still building with beams and tree-trunks for their pediments and pillars. The ornament is bold but never florid in the German way; the space is always so filled as to create either a pattern or an almost exaggeratedly individual piece of design; there is always meaning.

As the last century progressed the Russians, like ourselves, fell victims to the prevalent revivalism. The most grotesque and extraordinary structures resulted from the inspiration of so varied a past; the palaces of the Wittelsbachs or the inventions of Sir Gilbert Scott seem Palladian in their simplicity when compared with these neo-Slav town-halls and Kremlin-esque museums. Yet the innate feeling of the Russian race for the monumental, its long practice in the ordering of fantasy, its general lack of æsthetic inhibitions and love of æsthetic plain-speaking, have invested even these buildings with a virtue unknown to their contemporaries in other countries, and one which, under the magic of snow, attains almost to charm. This, of course, was the "preliminary period of imperialism." Finally, as the Boer War broke, a blast of *art nouveau* swept in from the West, to destroy the last vestiges of sanity and taste; though in Russia, even this style assumed a form so freakish and preposterous as to rescue it from the smug suburbanism of its manifestations elsewhere. Follows an interval of ten years. When the curtain lifts there appear Lenin's tomb and the graceless, but still monumental, concrete structures of the new industrial era.

In the provision of colour, the Russians have always relied for their effects on flat, cleanly outlined fields. The tints are emphatic, almost elementary; but the natural taste of the people, their skill in harmonizing and interweaving the various colour-fields into a balanced rhythm, together with the gigantic areas over which—in architecture at least—colour is employed, prevent the dominance of that shallow folkiness which so often strikes a false note in pictures and photographs. In this province more than any, the Russians have retained their Byzantine inheritance, as the icons show; but here again they have added their own principle of frank appeal to the eye rather than the mind. How that principle, applied to architectural colour, survived into the nineteenth century, may be seen today in the streets of Leningrad, where the present authorities have not only preserved and renovated the old Government yellow (said to have been introduced by an Italian to remind him of the sun), but are also engaged in restoring the palaces of the nobility to their original gay state. Thus the baroque façade of the Stroganov Palace, built by Rastrelli in 1754, has re-emerged with its white pilasters and volutes standing out against a lilac background; while opposite, across the Moika, an Empire block of later date displays white pillars on a ground of dark delphinium blue.

But colour in architecture must display something more than gaiety alone. Without richness of texture and material it becomes as tedious as an eternal pantomime. No people has understood this precept better than the Russians, and no country has ever been more naturally favoured with the means of acting on it. Gold leaf for their domes they have always been able to afford. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries they lavished bronze and brass upon their interiors and exteriors with the profusion that, in other countries, attaches to stucco. But the glory of Russia, from the builder's point of view, is her native quarries. The variety of her marbles and glistening labradors, her close-grained porphyries and granites, her stones of even finer texture—so fine that their appearance when polished is almost metallic—and her semi-precious varieties such as lapis and malachite, is inexhaustible, and even yet has scarcely been exploited. No shade, no texture that an architect can want, is lacking.

I had intended, had there been space, to show how consistently the Russian genius—such as I judge it to be and have attempted to describe in terms of architecture—displays itself in painting and sculpture and in the minor arts of metalwork, jewellery, furniture, and porcelain; and to show also how admirable are its results. But M. Lubetkin is waiting; and his impatience is doubtless shared by the reader. I will only say in conclusion, therefore, that from conversations with various eminent architects in Moscow, I gathered that an official architectural policy was now in process of inception which will eventually withhold its approval from the drab functionalism of the present era, and allow free play once more to the native genius of the country. The outstanding example of this genius, as it can and will be translated into the language of Materialism, is the Lenin mausoleum by the architect Stchousev. It achieves its success, as I have already mentioned, not by any compromise with the past—for a



Bronze decoration to THE WAR OFFICE, LENINGRAD
by Rossi, 1819-29.

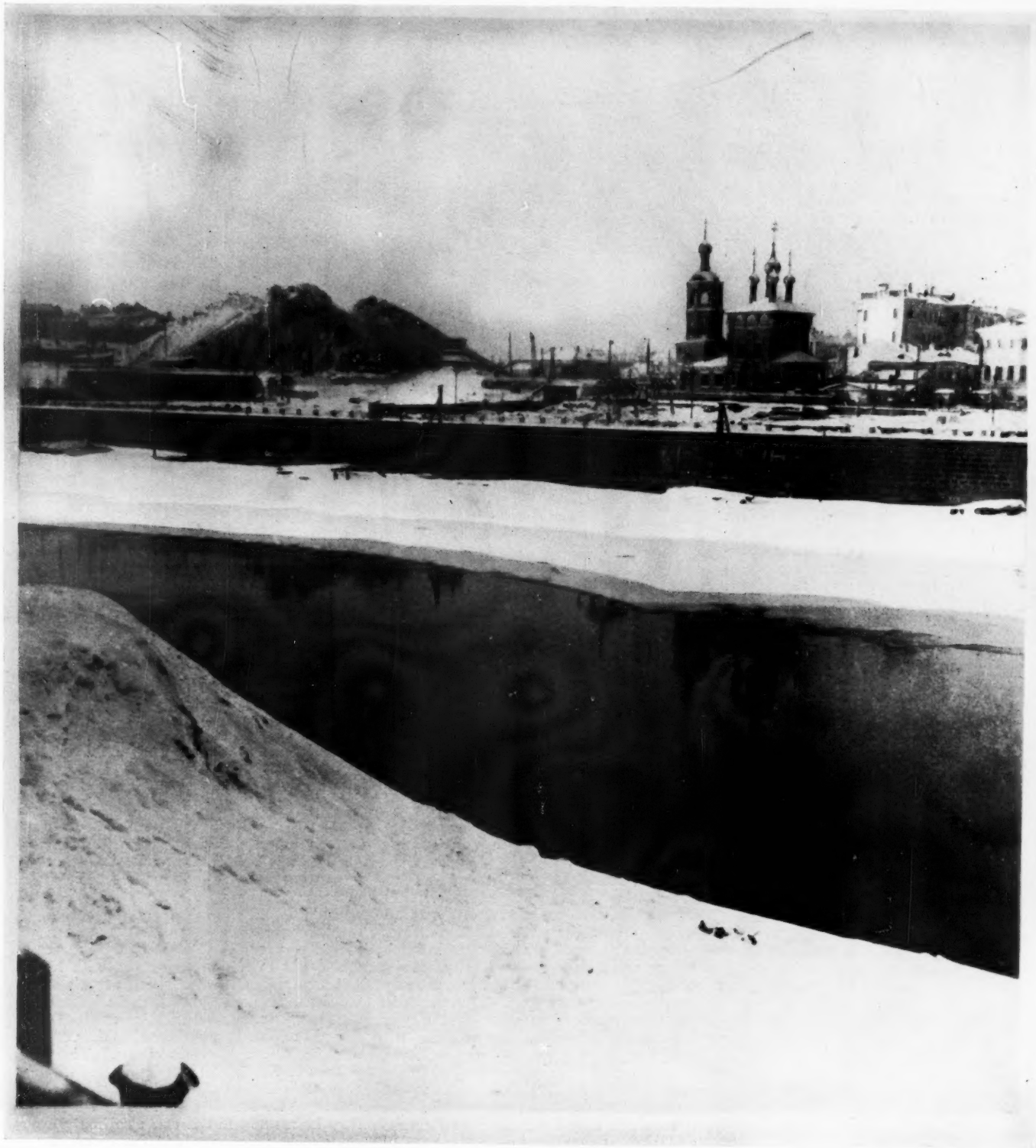


ART NOUVEAU. A country cottage by
Vladovsky, circa 1914.

more ruthless, more uncompromising monument has scarcely been erected since the Pyramids—but by the harmony of its colour with the old surroundings. Before visiting the chief architects of Moscow, I had inspected the plans submitted from all over the world for the new People's Palace, which is to occupy the site of the Cathedral "of the late Redeemer" recently demolished by explosion. This site is in the very heart of Moscow, and closely adjoins the Kremlin. Apart from the utter poverty of inventive ability displayed throughout the competition, I was concerned to notice that the designs were one and all of that gasometer or packing-case type which may be suitable to factories and even to tenements, but must inevitably have disfigured the centre of Moscow beyond redemption if erected on this site—as, indeed, the Tsik skyscraper on the other side of the river has succeeded in doing already. On stating my apprehensions to the architects Stchousev and Grinberg, they both replied that though the prizes would be allotted as promised, it had been decided to use none of the designs on account of those very reasons I had put forward; that the authorities were now casting about for ideas of a different character, being convinced that the ferrocrete style of the present was

entirely unsuited to the dignity of a great capital or to the Russian scene; and that one of the chief considerations in the choice of a new design would be the use of colour and of the fine Ural stones, by which means alone could a specifically modern building—which the People's Palace must and ought to be—avoid discord with its incomparable setting. There are those Russians, and plenty of them, who are sufficiently antiquated in their modes of thought to regard such discord as the very purpose of their artistic efforts. These victims of Materialist novelty fail to distinguish between "discord" and "difference." The first is mean. The second may be mean. But it can also imply a contrast between equals in artistic merit which provides the highest form of intellectual stimulus and contains in itself a ground of harmony between the opposing monuments. Let the new architecture be different by all means. But first let it solve the problem of differing like a man instead of like a naughty child. When, some years hence, the People's Palace is at last erected, it will be possible to see how far Bolshevik taste has progressed towards this solution, and how far the æsthetic genius of the country has begun to recover from the shocks of the last fifteen years.

THE PALACE OF THE SOVIETS, MOSCOW



The competition for the Palace of Soviet is a climax in the world of Soviet architecture. The construction in the centre of Moscow of a building of this importance, to be situated on the river bank and on an axis of the Kremlin, has put a very important problem before architects. The question of town planning in connection with this competition has been especially important to those responsible, as the site, where the Cathedral of the Redeemer originally stood (a moderately recent structure of little architectural interest), is situated at the junction of several main roads. On the north of the site is the termination of the boulevard which runs round Moscow, and on the south the bank of the river which cuts diagonally through the town. On the north-east is the broad boulevard which



(Above) *THE SITE OF THE PALACE OF THE SOVIETS* is the large mound on the left, where can be seen the remains of the Cathedral "of the late Redeemer," which was built in the middle of the last century, and was recently blown up. The small church to the right, known as "Praise the Virgin," has now been demolished. (Left) *PERRET'S PLAN*, which indicates the position of the site in relation to the river and the Kremlin (top right of plan). It also shows the space between the Palace and Kremlin cleared as a square, but this is merely a suggestion. The space is really occupied by the buildings seen in the photograph above. The site is about 20 feet above river level, and slopes to the river level on the west and north.

THE PALACE OF THE SOVIETS, MOSCOW

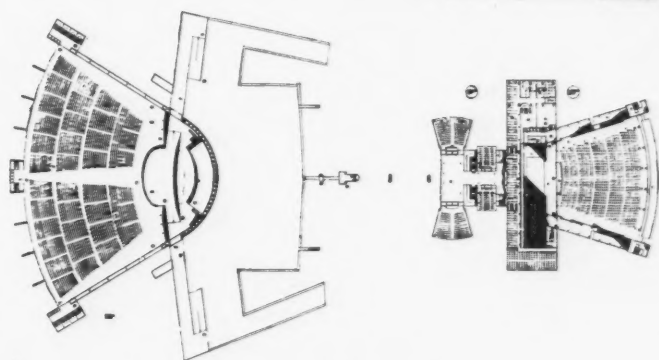
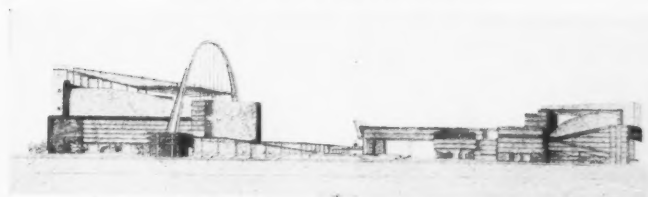
surrounds the Kremlin and passes through the Red Square, where Lenin's tomb is situated and where all public demonstrations are held.

The organization of traffic on the roads leading to the Palace of Soviets, and those from the Palace to the Red Square, and the difficult problem of entering and leaving the building, which must sometimes contain 25,000 people, have to be taken into account, as well as the parking of cars, and the distribution of underground stations, some of which are already in construction. Moscow is bisected by the river, and to join together both parts of the town a new bridge is to be built.

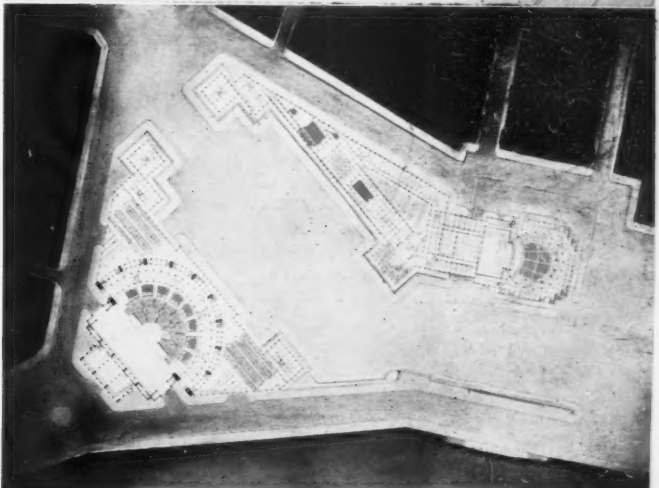
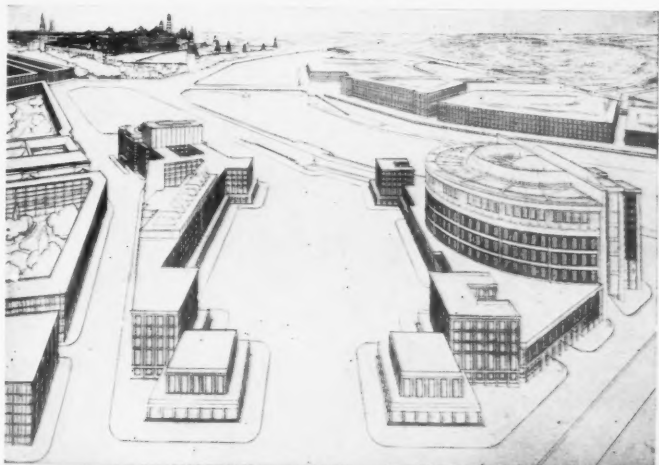
The Palace of Soviets will be a social centre of the greatest importance, and a kind of modern forum in the political sense, in which all the problems of the new collective society will be discussed. The building is to provide a large assembly hall, to seat 15,000 persons, with a stage-arena on which the new methods of collective works and new inventions, etc., can be demonstrated. Special parts have been set aside for 300 members of the Council, members of the Soviet and foreign Press, and the diplomatic corps. Delegates are to be seated so that they can get into direct communication with the speaker. A chair for the speaker, a screen, and various means of demonstration technique are to be provided. The architect was also requested to solve various specific problems, such as the organization of the seating accommodation so that every member of the audience may easily reach the arena, and to arrange that there is the greatest possible conjunction between the stagework and the auditorium. The problem of acoustics has also to be taken into consideration; no mechanical arrangements are to be used. Another hall, to seat 6,000 people, is to be built for the work of congresses, conferences, and administrative and technical work. It is to be made soundproof from street noises. Occasionally this hall will be used as a theatre and will therefore contain all the necessary modern stage equipment. There is also to be a gallery to seat 2,000 spectators, with its own entrances and services. For the use of delegates and the public in both halls, restaurants and cloakrooms will be provided. Beside the two large halls, the scheme includes two small independent halls to hold 500 people each, a large library, exhibition rooms, departments for the secretariats, the Press and diplomatic corps, a wireless station, rooms for an orchestra, and many other secondary rooms and dressing rooms. The two small halls are to be built so that, if necessary, they can be used at the same time.

The preparation of this scheme was a very large task, and the Government of the U.S.S.R. were obliged to ask various architectural organizations to submit proposed schemes which could be utilized, if necessary, in the definite and final scheme. Most of the designs obtained in this way have shown great ingenuity, a very powerful spirit of invention, and a desire not to design the new scheme on the models of the past. It is true that very often the fantasies of the Soviet architects have carried them much too far, and some of them did not think about the special character of the scheme, about its scale, and about several technical difficulties; nevertheless, the designs of ARU, ASNOVA, SASS, WOPRA and LADOVSKY have shown solutions which in many ways meet the

LE CORBUSIER



PERRET

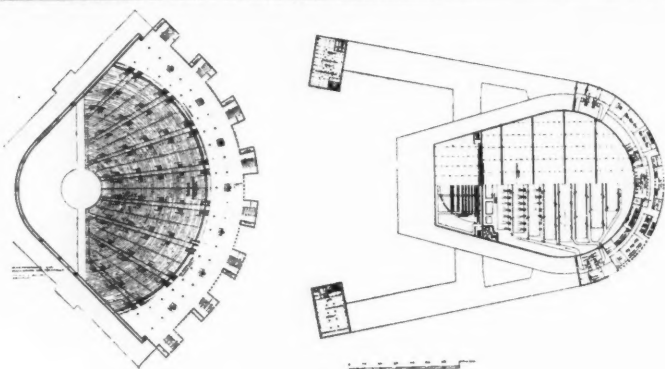
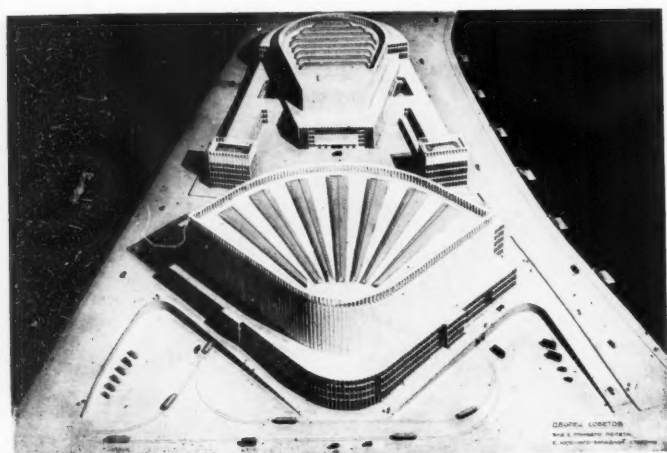


(1) LE CORBUSIER'S project for the Palace of Soviets. The design provides two separate halls. In front of the larger of the two there is a platform to be used for the grouping of processions. A sound reflector enables a speaker to address demonstrators collected there. A bridge unites the two halls. A reinforced concrete arch with beams holds up the roof. Both the small halls, to seat 500 people each, are separately accessible. All the administration offices are grouped in one building.

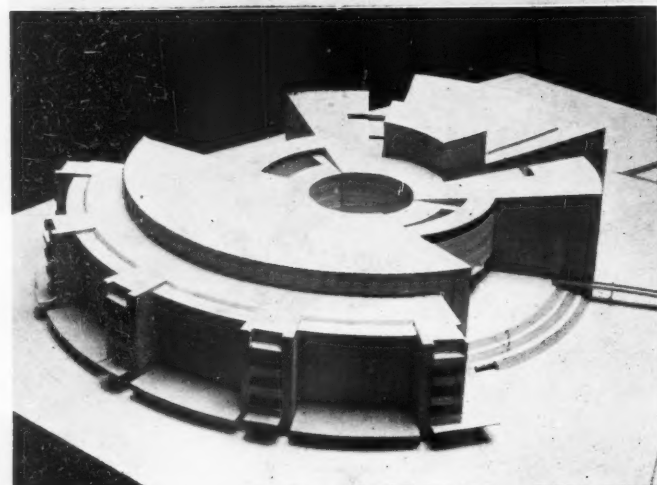
(2) PERRET'S designs. He divides both halls and creates an interior court. For the sake of symmetry he is obliged to make one of the buildings of unusual shape, and thus the administration rooms in the building are divided into two groups.

THE PALACE OF THE SOVIETS, MOSCOW

POELZIG



GROPIUS



desires of the judges, and have given many radical solutions to the various problems. Public conferences and Press campaigns helped to make known the decision of the judges. The judges decided to allow foreign, as well as Russian, architects to submit designs. As a result of this, apparently, more than 450 projects have been prepared, and all these have been exhibited in Moscow. The judges were helped in their decision by leading public men, artists, and specialists in acoustics and stage equipment, who visited the exhibition and gave their opinions. The working masses also viewed the designs and sent their opinions to the judges. As a result of all this, the awards have been given, but the judges have pointed out that none of the projects can be entirely carried out, and that a special architectural committee has been formed to create a design on the lines of the winning schemes.

The old Cathedral of the Redeemer, the site of which can be seen on the left in the picture on page 196, was demolished several months ago, and building operations will begin immediately the definite scheme has been adopted, as building must be completed by November 7, 1933, which is the end of the first Five-Year Plan. It is clear that the design of a Soviet Palace is a turning-point in the history of Soviet architecture. When examining the prize-winning schemes, a very significant change is seen in the attitude to what is called modern architecture. The social architectural organization has not been able to impress the problems of modern architecture sufficiently deeply upon the masses, who, as a result of the secular retirement of Russia, have a very small experience of the problems of taste. This fact has led to a very particular appreciation of the submitted designs. When examining some of the chosen ones we get the impression that the only preoccupation of the jury, under the pressure of the visiting masses, was the decorative and impressive exterior. The scientific and utilitarian organization of modern architecture was recognized as an attribute of "poverty." The idea "that we must show that we also can build palaces" was definitely victorious, in spite of the declaration of the Soviet Press, which said "that the Palace of Soviet must not look like the works of the past, must be specifically proletarian, and must not, above all, resemble the realization of capitalist architecture, because it is not a parliament, not a temple, but the symbolical expression of the magnificent results of the proletarian dictatorship." Judgment was given on quite a different basis. The dualistic combination of form and function was again lifted, and æstheticism received the greatest consideration. Russia is a long way from realizing that a building shows a new social idea, and a long way to identifying the work of the architects with the work of the inventors. The free play of forms and materials has been judged like the ideas of the proletarian architecture. The solution goes from a temple of art with its vertical lines inspired by the Paris Exhibition of Decorative Arts, to a Roman Coliseum barbarically denuded of its architectural unity, going through the spiral towers (eminently revolutionary spiral!) and surmounted by the statue of a symbolical worker. Let us hope that a definite scheme will be liberated for easy decoration and "*petit-bourgeois* symbolism" of this infantile megalomania which will astonish and impress through the forms begun haphazard. The world waits anxiously for this result which, it is hoped, will go a step forward towards an architecture which merits the name of architecture.

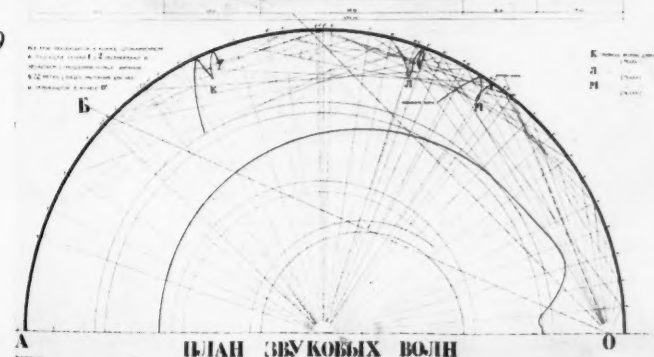
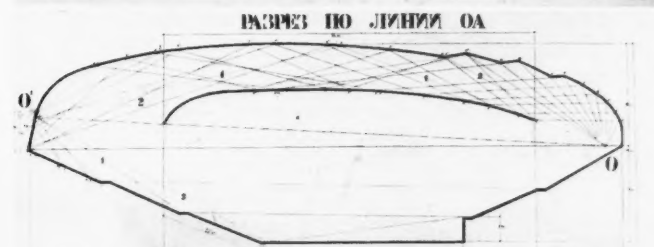
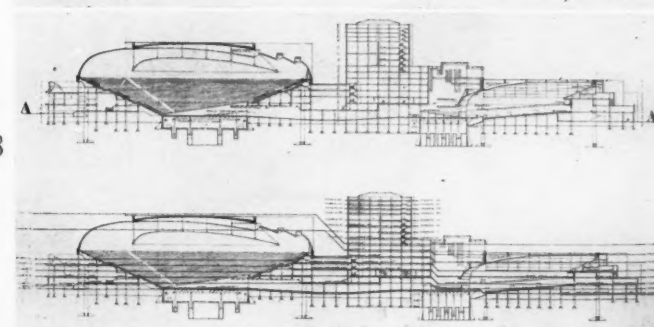
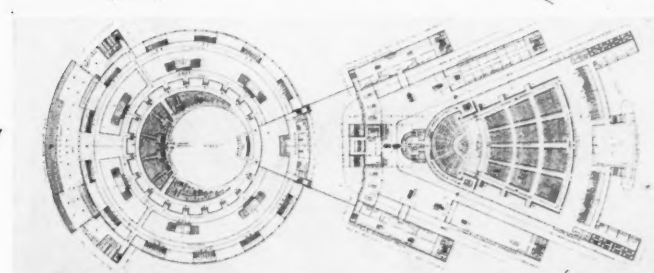
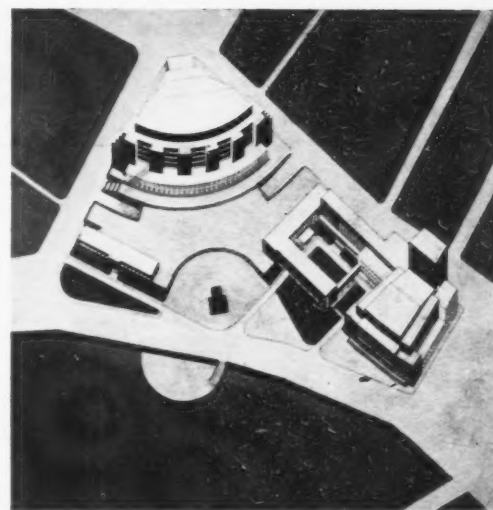
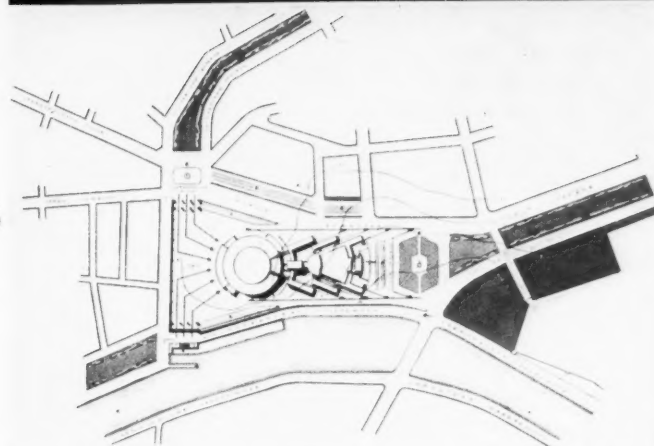
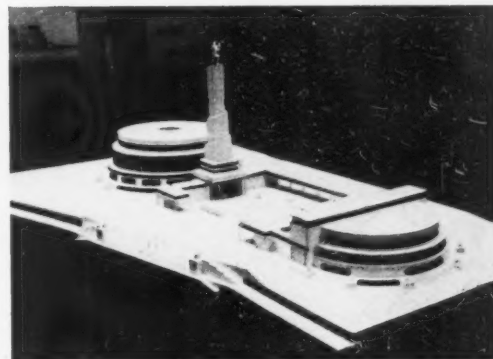
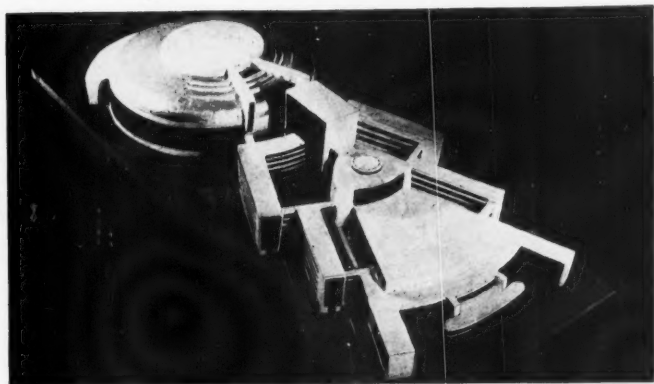
(3) POELZIG'S design is interesting from a town-planning point of view, as it gives facilities to traffic. The æsthetic is based on the Schauspielhaus building in Berlin. The entrances are rather too close together.

(4) In GROPIUS'S designs the two halls are together in a circular building. The interior arrangement shows many possibilities of modern stage arrangement and facilities of circulation in the building. The space in front of the Palace is a little too small, considering the possibility of demonstrations.

THE PALACE OF THE SOVIETS, MOSCOW

BLUM, LUBETKIN AND SIGALIN

IOFAN



(5) to (10). This design, which was purchased by the Government, allows the joining together of the stages of both halls and easy admittance for delegations and processions into the halls. The public entrances are quite separate from those of the staff, councils, press, etc., and the service traffic is one-way, using the slopes between the wings of the conference hall. Both halls are insulated from outside noises. A system of corridors provides a way for delegates, etc., to pass from their own rooms to their particular seats in the hall without changing the level. The central library is placed in the centre of the building. The round shape of the big hall in the form of an amphitheatre has been chosen as giving the best way of linking the actors with the spectators. The acoustic problem was solved by shaping the ceiling in the form of a loud speaker. The waves of sound have been directed between the two ceilings and equally distributed over the auditorium. The experiences with a model made by one of the assistants of the Sorbonne University have shown equal distribution of sound all over the auditorium with only 20 per cent. loss of sound energy. The ribs on the roof are the result of higher space needed over the speaker for placing the cinema screen. On the front elevation of the Palace of Soviets a graph is built on which neon lighting indicates the level of corresponding provisions of the Five-Year Plan. This graph is filled up with opal glass bricks, graduated according to the results of each industry and showing the relation of the amount realized to the specified quantity.

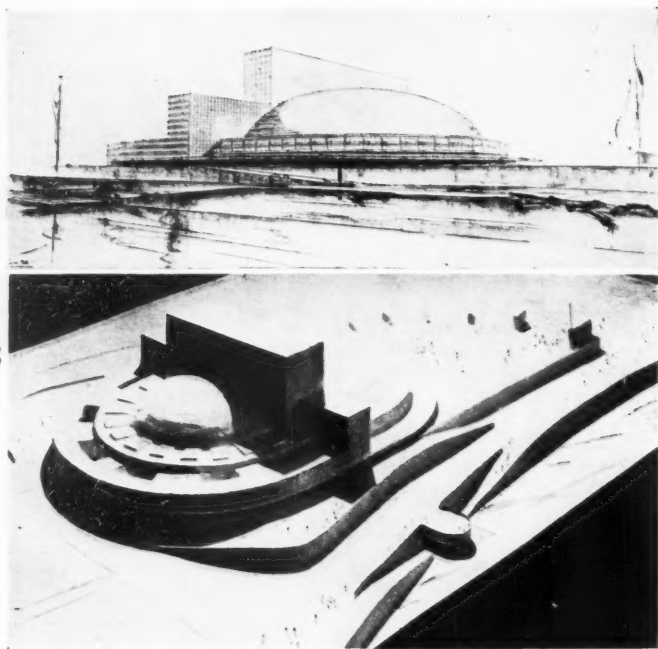
(11) The design by Iofan, which was most highly commended by the judges, creates a *court d'honneur* for the demonstrations to be held outside the Palace of Soviets. This court opens on to the river bank with an excellent view of Moscow. The big hall is circular, and the special seats for the council are in the centre, which means that the council have their backs towards the audience. The judges did not approve of this, nor of the very large gallery running round the hall. As far as the æsthetic side is concerned, this design shows a very strange combination of classic and modernistic forms. It was stated that the round hall with a decorative tower in front, recalled the similar round church designs.

(12) The design of the American architect, Urbans, divides the services into two parts (see Perret's design). The space in front of the big hall provides a good place for exterior demonstrations, which can be held here without interfering with the traffic, but the position of the two halls makes insulating from exterior noises very difficult and creates a certain confusion in services.



THE PALACE OF THE SOVIETS, MOSCOW

MENDELSON



13

(13) Mendelsohn's designs, ordered by the Government, for the Palace of Soviets competition. Attention is called to the interesting solution to the differences of level problem. The two halls are connected by the stages, but the creation of poorly lighted courts was the result of grouping the two parts together to form one building.

(14) In the design by Doriz and Douchkin both sides of the prismatical glass building contain semicircular halls. (One of the prize winning designs.)

(16) Design for the Palace of Soviets by Langbard.

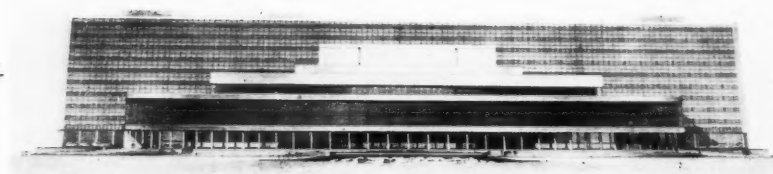
(17) Design by Brazini, the Fascist Italian architect. This design was commended by the jury, who seemed quite in favour of Roman architecture in the centre of Moscow!

LANGBARD



16

DORIZ AND DOUCHKIN

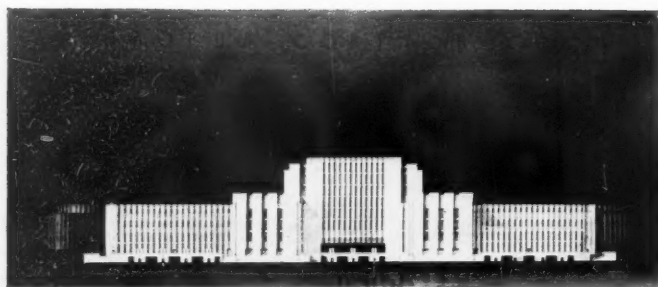


14

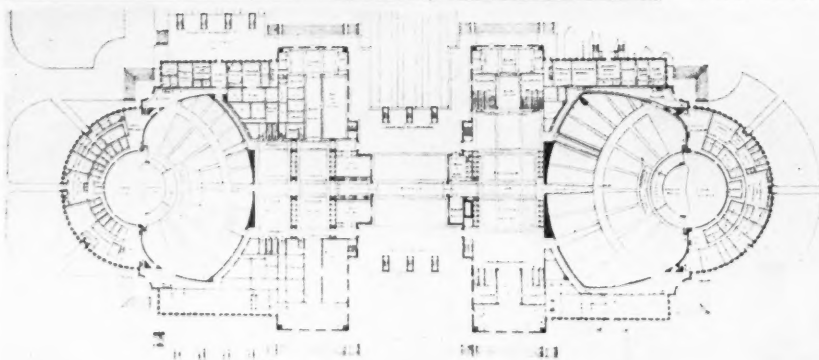
BRAZINI



HAMILTON



15



(15) The design by Hamilton, the American architect, was a big success and created much comment at the Exhibition in Moscow. In analysing this design we must agree that general approval was gained more by the æsthetic side of it than by the technical solution. The central part of the building is faced with white native granite, and the two circular ends with black granite. Symmetry is obtained by the position of the two halls, one for 15,000 people, and the other for 5,000 people, both having the same external features (note the small area occupied by the halls in respect to the rest of the building). The

approach to the building does not show an understanding of the importance the Palace of Soviets will play in the social life of U.S.S.R. In fact, Professor Max Meyer, a German critic, says that it is more like a city building with its underground stations in the basement than the representative building of Moscow. The space in front for the assembling of processions, etc., must be considered as one of its most important parts. The interior arrangements do not take into consideration the distance between Chicago and Moscow, as the lifts and staircases would be more suitable for the American business man, and are not essential in the Palace of Soviets. The same applies to the artificial lighting of the rooms. The method of inscribing the two halls in a rectangle, complicates the general scheme.

W

ce of
to the
but
parts

tical
gns.)

was
ture

16

ccess
y this
hetic
aced
nite.
ople,
e the
The
f the
fe of
ritic,
ound
g of
ions,
arts.
n the
cases
and
plies
d of
the



THE RUSSIAN SCENE, 1932: the Petrovsky metal factory at Nizhno-Dneprovsk, Ukraine.
PLATE V. *May* 1932.

Part II—The Builders

By Berthold Lubetkin

NOTE.—The statements in these articles are based on memory quotations from Sovetskaya Arkhitektura, Professor Milutin's works, and S.A.

I—Architectural Thought since the Revolution

IT is a principle of the Cartesian school of philosophy to determine the precise limits of a subject before considering the problem presented by it. The subject with which we are here concerned is the evolution of architectural thought in Russia from the outbreak of the Revolution up to the present moment.

Under a socialist system—a system, that is, which presumes the existence of a guiding plan for the evolution of society, and allows no social activity to develop chaotically or anarchically—the theory becomes “a sketch which is one day destined to assume the proportions of a vast general programme for humanity.”

“In a capitalistic society the proletariat cannot achieve equality or social liberty. As a consequence it ought to assume a hostile attitude towards the existing state of society, and to be bent on the reorganization of society as a whole. In other words it is bound to be revolutionary. It is for this reason that the proletariat demands a complete and definite theory of human society so that it may determine how to reorganize every social institution. The necessity to base oneself on the authority of a theory—a necessity which has disappeared among the bourgeoisie ever since the bourgeoisie became reactionary—is affirming itself more and more strongly among the proletariat as a direct consequence of the proletariat's special position as the revolutionary class” (Kautsky).

Soviet architecture lives in an atmosphere that is tense with the continuous struggle of conflicting ideological tendencies. These tendencies are the despair of Western Europeans, who pretend they “got over that sort of thing while they were still at school.”

But theory in Russia is never understood as something mechanically adjusted to the content of a subject; it always remains a fragmentary part of the general plan of the social structure.

It is not astonishing, therefore, that Soviet architects feel no animosity towards theories (as do their colleagues in capitalistic countries) because their ambition is not simply to build architecturally, but to build socialistically as well. The exhortation to struggle against blind chance is inscribed in gigantic letters on the pediment of socialism.

But what about “absolute truth,” “eternal beauty,” etc.? it may be asked.

When Napoleon asked Laplace why there was no mention of the Creator throughout the whole of his great scientific work, *La Mécanique Céleste*, the latter replied with dignity: “I had no need of that hypothesis.”

The Situation before the Overthrow of the Old Regime

FROM the earliest days of the Revolution, the Soviet community set itself to face the problems presented by the necessity for fostering proletarian art and culture.

Public interest in them was daily stimulated by the discussion of the conflicting principles and slogans. The ideology of proletarian art gradually crystallized in an atmosphere heavily charged with political and economic struggles.

At one moment this intellectual agitation reached such a degree of intensity that the “ideologists” of art ran the danger of isolating themselves from realities in the cloud castles of abstract and speculative theorism.

This was clearly impossible from the point of view of Marxian philosophy: an embodiment of materialistic doctrines which condemns all idealistic deviations from its basic principles. On

several occasions the Soviet community took the initiative in counteracting this tendency. In the course of a special series of lectures, the Communist Party laid down the theses for an ideology of proletarian art adapted to the transitional period of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

There was no parallel activity as regards architecture. The architects continued in the traditional manner, without bothering their heads about an ideological basis for their work; and ignored the special demands of the present historical moment.

Immersed in an artificial tradition, and engrossed with the sacrosanct forms of the past, the architects refused to tackle the problems presented by the creation of a new social order. Their work remained for some time completely aloof from the masses.

The pre-war period had bequeathed Russia an unfortunate architectural heritage. The form of barbarism known as *art nouveau*, which swept across Europe at the beginning of the century, acclimatized itself effortlessly enough in the picturesque landscape of commercial Moscow. Its opulent forms even penetrated into the Academy, and debased the appearance of the streets and squares of the large towns. Once these *art-nouveau* houses fell into disrepair their ugliness became more unendurable than ever. Government and municipal offices slumbered in complete inactivity, paralysed by the corruption and indifference of their staffs.

On the theoretical side, the eclecticism of the Academies vied with the sentimental and literary opportunism of the protagonists of local colour and folk-lore.

Such was the situation when the proletariat came into power. A complete stocktaking and a wholesale reorganization were essential. Here, as elsewhere, the Revolution began by destroying old fetishes.

The period immediately following the Revolution was entirely devoted to economic reconstruction. All the active forces of the country were concentrated on the reorganization of production, and the creation of a new political framework. Yet a certain activity was shown from the outset by the younger generation of artists, who turned their attention to remodelling the forms and conceptions inherited from the old regime, since these no longer corresponded with the actualities of the new social order.

The streets and squares of Moscow and the provincial cities were filled with makeshift monuments of papier mâché, wood, or plaster. Tribunes and pulpits for orators, and kiosks and stands for posters arose on all sides. The streets began to look like the wings of a theatre. The Revolution was consolidated amid the greatest difficulties, and to the accompaniment of an extraordinary intellectual ferment. The steel ring of the blockade continued to tighten alarmingly round an exhausted country. Further misfortunes soon followed. All constructional activity became impossible in face of the great dearth of food and fuel. In a truly pathetic nostalgia for order, the trees of the public squares were decked with strands of cotton materials to create monumental perspectives for the government buildings in which beat the pulse of the nation.

But as soon as the country started to recover from famine and exhaustion, culture began to assert its rights once more. The faculties of the universities resumed their courses, and the architectural schools were thronged with a new type of student, eager to learn and to analyse.

Constructivism

The hitherto unquestioned authority of eclectic professors and bourgeois specialists, whose knowledge was based on studies of the opportunist past, was swept away by the burning enthusiasm of

the young revolutionary architects. Project followed project, and a nucleus was gradually developed. "Cells" were organized, and an attempt was made to map out the general lines of the new architecture. Each phase of this work was accompanied by the most burning discussions, and the struggles of groups, personalities, and tendencies. Brigades and collective organizations of students were created in rapid succession. Autodidactic cliques were formed and plastered the walls of the schools with proclamations and posters. Revolutionary dynamism blew the bottom out of forms and principles that were historically obsolete. Tatlin constructed the model of his spiral steel tower, with its cubes of glass actuated by a rotary movement. It was intended that the congresses of the Third International should be held in these cubic cells. The model, which for lack of proper materials was constructed of bits of old tins and cigar-boxes, was publicly exhibited; and attracted attention to the new constructivist architecture.

The dynamism of spiral architectural forms, the worship of construction which relied solely on such plastic qualities as answered to a certain canon of industrial forms, that was based on the precepts of a new, and vaguely defined, aesthetic, were taken into serious consideration, and founded a school. The red ribbon which hung above the model, and bore the inscription, "Engineers, create new forms!", was carried by a band of enthusiastic students, and placed in the corner of honour above the portrait of Lenin.

Once the initial impetus had been given, projects for "new objects" were produced wholesale. The young architects set to work to devise new types of kitchen-ranges and crockery, and even things for which they were wholly without the technical qualifications, like miners' safety lamps, cranes, transporter-bridges for dry docks, motor-car head-lamps, and field-glasses. This romantic "engineerism" could not hope to conceal its ignorance of the objects it was applied to for long. The fetishism of "real objects" and "useful things" soon broke down, and the movement quickly

degenerated into a kind of formal decoration based on a sentimental mechanistic aesthetic.

If we analyse this mania for utilitarianism, this desire to impose engineering solutions at all cost, we shall have little difficulty in discovering that it was based on the psychology of the radical intelligentsia, which had accepted the October Revolution, but was obsessed by a craving for the material comforts now lacking in everyday life. Herded together in overcrowded flats, with rain driving through the decaying roofs, and deprived of all the things they had formerly been accustomed to, they dreamt of glass and concrete palaces, skyscrapers, with batteries of lifts and moving staircases.

Formalism

But the "constructivist" movement was not the only expression of the new architectural thought. Symbolism was busily elaborating principles of its own. The *atelier* of Professors N. Golosov and Ladovsky launched new doctrines (1920-22) based on the study of forms. The adherents of this school envisaged an "objective," absolute, and universal system, based on the reactions of the perceptive organism of the spectator. They carried out laboratory investigations into the study of scale, modulism, the relations of rhythm, proportion and mass, statics and dynamics regarded as functions of volume, etc. But in spite of all their endeavours, they remained purely abstract, idealistic and emotional. In a short time a whole series of expressive forms had been created, which could be grouped together in compositions to give the "idea" of a building. This new symbolism, with its cubes suggesting the conception of integrity, its spheres and balls expressive of the ideas of tranquillity and equilibrium, and its transposition of geometric forms to serve as attributes of dynamism and impulse, soon created an aesthetic canon, imprisoned within its own strait-jacket, that was inhuman and incomprehensible for the non-initiated: a sort of universalism of the Larousse type, but a universalism in which everything became subjective and conventional.

It is interesting that the same ideas which were then gaining adherents in Russia were simultaneously reflected in foreign tendencies. In proof of this it is only necessary to cite the German paper *Freiheit* (1922): "The capitalistic individualist, when trying to express his personality, prefers the horizontal line or an immobile column. The socialist, on the other hand, prefers the climbing horizontal line (spiral), which embraces his fellow men in its course and soars upwards to embrace the heavens. Collectivist buildings ought to be constructed in a circular form in a spirit of opposition to the limitations of rectangles."

In Russia a quantity of projects for spherical mausoleums and record offices in the shape of pyramids began to be elaborated. Numerous buildings, intended for various purposes, had spiral planes, so as to embody what was claimed to be a curve expressive of revolutionary dynamism. "The spiral," one critic of this period wrote, "is a line of liberation for humanity. With one extremity resting on the ground, it flees the earth with the other; and thereby becomes a symbol of disinterestedness, and of the converse of earthly pettiness." (Pounin, 1922.)

All this romantic symbolism, all these *petit bourgeois* metaphysics, could not hope to survive for long in the atmosphere of Soviet realities; and we soon witnessed the first materialistic reactions to this phase within the same schools as had engendered it. As early as 1928, Ladovsky, while still continuing his abstract researches into "the expression of form," tried to break with formal symbolism by introducing "biopsychological and psychotechnical criteria." These investigations, though still strongly influenced by aesthetic and abstract researches into what was vaguely defined as "form in general," none the less mark a decidedly rationalistic tendency. Other groups, though gradually liberating themselves from metaphysical symbolism, speedily fell back into mechanistic symbolism. We saw projects elaborated for theatres in the form of electric dynamos, clubs in the shape of water turbines, and Palaces of the People serrated with toothed cogwheels; to say nothing of public libraries modelled on oil-fired boilers.

Happily for Soviet architecture none of these projects got beyond the paper stage, and consequently they were powerless to prejudice its early

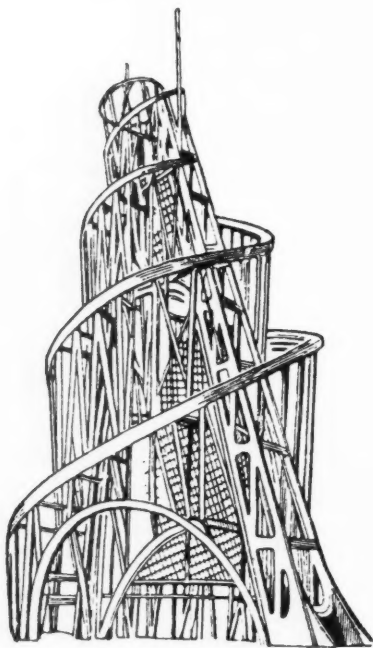


THE ELEVATION OF TATLIN'S PROJECT, reproduced as a poster because of the popularity of his design.

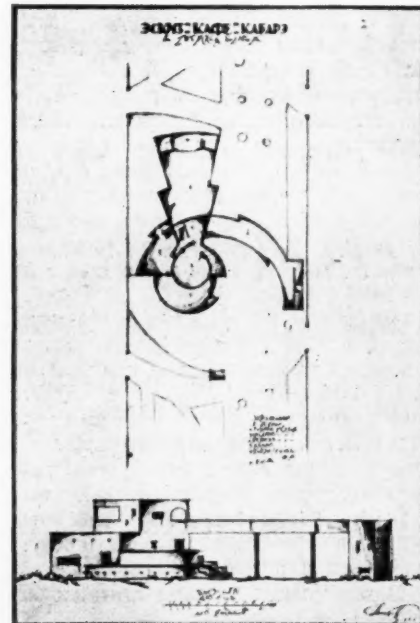
development. All the same it would be unjust to deny the great educative influence they exerted on large circles of students, and public opinion generally. At the base of the ideology of the various existing architectural groups we shall find reminiscences of the doctrines which were the battle cries of the moment during their members' student days. It is only by taking this initial period of theoretic researches into account that we can hope to attempt an analysis of the actual ideological bases of the Soviet architecture of today.

The Need of Revaluation of Architectural Values in the Face of Concrete Problems

After the end of the civil war, when the country had recovered from its exhaustion, and was beginning to enter the period of reconstruction—



The scheme for the building of the COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL AT MOSCOW, by Tatlin. Included in the steel spiral are three glass geometric figures having a rotatory movement. Congresses sit in the various rooms, which rotate once a year, once a week, and once a day respectively, according to the different councils that meet there.



A plan of a RESTAURANT IN THE BOULEVARD MOSCOW, 1922. A "spiral obsession."

the task of consolidating the foundations of a Socialist State—the architectural man-power of the nation, by then almost entirely the younger generation of architects just emerging from the schools, was confronted with grim reality. These young men were sent to occupy positions among the constructors of the new society.

Here for the first time they were made to realize the gulf which separated the subjective researches of the schools from the imperative demands of the moment, and the lack of proper theoretic and practical training which rendered them impotent in face of the immediate problems raised by the basic changes in economic and political life. Reality caught these young architects at a considerable disadvantage. They had to reorganize their technical equipment and change their point of view with the utmost rapidity.

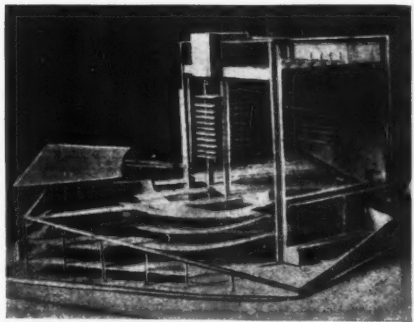
As a result of the vast programme of construction, large masses of the population began to interest themselves in architectural problems. The various architectural theses were discussed at public meetings and in the Press. The courses of architecture attracted students from ever wider sections of the community; and as a result, the necessity for the creation of a social-architectural organization became an objective one.

ASNOVA and its Formalism

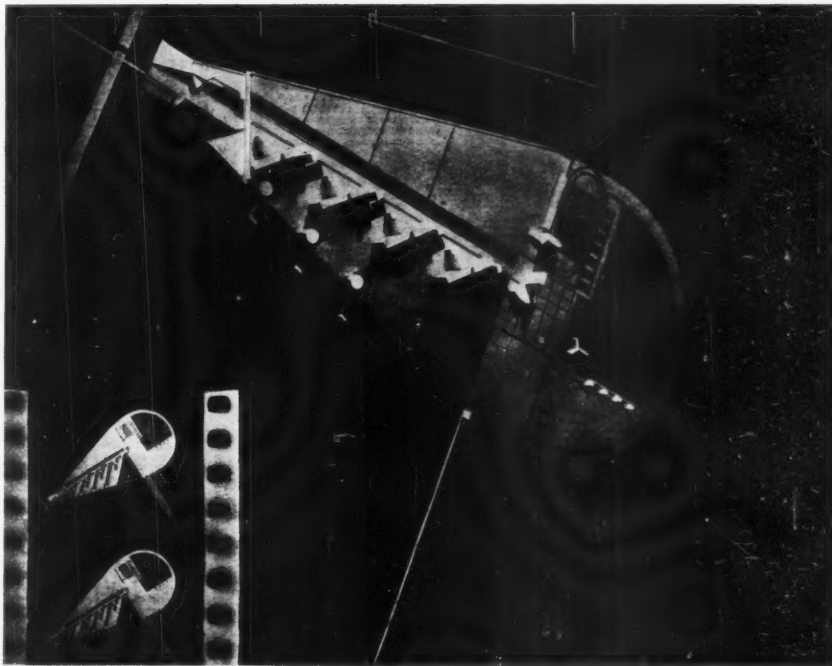
In 1923 the first association of the new type of architects was founded under the title of ASNOVA. This group also included young painters and sculptors, most of whom came from Ladovsky's atelier. It began with works that were wholly in the symbolical and æsthetic tradition. But in proportion as the problems of the



CLUB OF THE COMMUNAL WORKERS, MOSCOW. Architect, Melnikov. This building is a typical expression of the "formalistic" æsthetic of the ASNOVA group, combined with a certain ingenuity of planning. The three projecting features of the building are the amphitheatres of the auditoriums which all look on to one stage at the back of the building.



A model of the interior arrangement of **THE PALACE OF SOVIET**, designed by Balakov, Budo and others. This is typical work of the ASNOVA group, showing the æsthetic tendency even in technical problems of interior circulation.



THE LIVING QUARTER OF AUTOSTROY, by Kalmykov. This design shows the typical early ARU group conceptions. The pear shape of the quarter facilitates easy outside traffic. The four buildings in the plan at the top are the dwellings—"commune." Other buildings are crèches, kindergarten, clubs, schools, theatres, etc. In the bottom left corner can be seen a section of a film illustrating the problems of circulation, lighting, etc., of this project.

moment became more concrete and urgent, this group modified its principles. In recognizing that architecture is a plastic art, the supreme *raison d'être* of which is to rouse the enthusiasm of the masses, it began to approach tangibly nearer to reality.

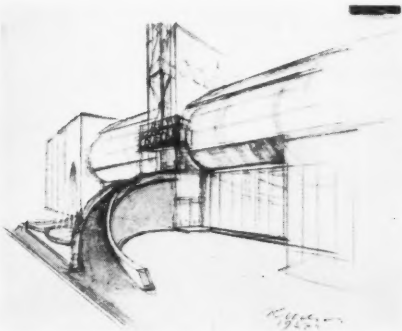
In the declaration which it addressed to the Soviet Community in *Sovetskaya Arhitektura*, ASNOVA declared that the creation of new revolutionary forms can only be based on the latest scientific and technical achievements; and that proletarian architecture must co-operate with other social-economic factors in co-ordinating industrial and social functions. In this way it can express its socialist content, and actively mould the ideology of the masses in a revolutionary sense.

Granted such an attitude to architecture, the concrete problems of socialist building construction ought not to be limited to the mere planning of industrial and social processes in terms of space and material; forms ought not to be allowed to fulfil their functions merely passively. They should, on the contrary, create a powerful impression on the

ideology of the masses by every plastic means which the imagination can command. In solving problems connected with industrial and social reconstruction, proletarian architecture must present a dialectic synthesis of economic, technical, plastic, and ideological factors. It must also fully respond to the needs of the moment, and at the same time emphasize its socialist elements in a dialectical sense; since its solutions will be plastic as well as technical.

It is clear that on this point the doctrines of the old æstheticizing symbolists, so carefully elaborated in the schools, come into conflict with the Marxian thesis. The definition of the "plastic factor" as being the same thing as technique, economics, and ideology, explains the idealist and formalist standpoint of the ASNOVA group. Marxian philosophy ignores this "factor," and pitilessly unmasks the vague criteria of "universalism," "abstract humanitarianism," and "eternal values" as figments of the idealist philosophy of the bourgeois world. None the less it is undeniable that ASNOVA has since evolved towards a nearer and nearer approach to the materialistic point of view. Its latest manifestoes, and its more recent work, prove that this group has been gradually liberating itself from "objective" plasticism, and that it is now definitely beginning to adopt proletarian—that is to say dialectic—methods.

Many members of ASNOVA occupy important positions in the architectural schools, where they are engaged in training the new classes of architects. Among the works of this group mention should be made of the Red International Stadium at Moscow, the Soviet Pavilions at the Paris Exposition des Arts Décoratifs in 1925 (where a Grand Prix was obtained), and the exhibitions at Strasbourg (Grand Prix Hors Concours) in 1929, Bordeaux, Marseilles, etc. This group organizes public discussions and lectures, arranges exhibitions, takes part in competitions, and executes orders on a collective and collaborative basis. Other examples of its work include the House of Industry, the Vzik School, the White-Russian Academy of Sciences, the Palace of Labour, the Palace of the Soviets, and many town-planning schemes (such as those for the towns of Autostroy, Magnitogorsk, and Tchardjui), and the laying-out of squares in Moscow, besides schemes for new parks.



A design for the **SVOBODA CLUB FOR CHEMICAL WORKERS** by Melnikov. The drawing shows clearly the formalistic æsthetic of the ASNOVA group.

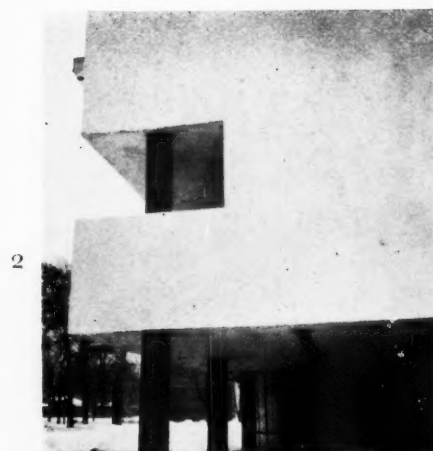
FLATS FOR THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIAT IN MOSCOW BY GINSBURG



In spite of the statement of the SASS that architecture has nothing to do with fine art, a very strong æsthetic preoccupation will be seen in the works of this group, in spite of plastical decoration—the use of construction as a decorative element.

I

Flats built to house the employees of the People's Commissariat in a park-like space off one of the Moscow Boulevards. *Architect*, Ginsburg. The roof is occupied by a garden. The long rows of windows are of double glass and give on to corridors which connect with the various apartments. The cills of the windows (6) are constructed in the shape of boxes with water drainage, and are made for containing flowers. The building is designed according to the scheme of collective dwellings, with a centralization of all their services. There are nurseries, schools, clubs and restaurants. (2) A detail of an angle showing the characteristic tendency of a playful constructive system. (3) A small annexe joined to the main building by a bridge, and containing a nursery, school and club. This also has a roof garden. (4) Semi-circular balconies at one end. (5) A view under the building showing three lines of supporting reinforced pillars. Notice the strip light in the ceiling. The floor is not finished and will ultimately be paved with stone slabs. (Typical work of the SASS group.)



2



3



4



5



6

ARU and its Town-Planning Theory

In 1929, Ladovsky, one of the original founders of ASNOVA, detached himself from it, and started a new group called ARU (the Association of Town-Planning Architects). The ideas of this group do not differ a great deal from those of ASNOVA so far as its "methodological" principles are concerned. We find the same approach to architecture as a medium of formal expression. But the ARU group applies itself to the study of architecture as one of the functions of town-planning, and not as a separate entity, or a thing in itself.

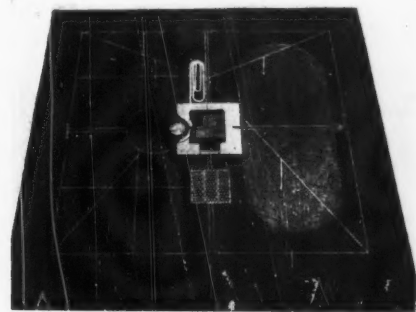
ARU declares that in the complex of questions which the architect is called upon to examine with some degree of consecutiveness, the most important is the consideration of man as a social being in relation to his class environment. They say that it is possible to approach the sum of the problems with which the architect is faced both in terms of space organization and space composition: but these two aspects must be considered jointly, not separately. This method of arriving at a solution of the problem is the only one which can hope to deal adequately with the more general question of architectural organization and planning. It is necessary when examining the relation of these to a given building to refer back to the principles which are involved in solving the general problem: that is to say, to the architectural planning and co-ordination of the town itself.

In contrast to the capitalist system, which precludes the possibility of submitting the whole of a given urban area to a scheme of planning and co-ordination, the socialist system creates objective conditions for its architecture. It is only through scientific investigation of the problems of town-planning that an effective solution can be found for the larger problems connected with the redistribution of population.

In analysing the practical work and ideology of this group, the critic of *Sovetskaia Arkhitektura* has pointed out the metaphysical and anti-dialectic character of the opposition of "deductivism" (from the general to the particular) to "inductivism" (from the particular to the general).

In proposing a part of the totality as its principle, ARU offers no dialectic solutions for planning problems, because it is just as necessary to envisage the function of the town as a whole, as the particular functions of its separate zones, buildings, and cells—since these are units complete in themselves within the wider orbit of proletarian political and social economy. On the other hand the principles of town-planning, on which the whole of ARU'S work is based, are incompatible with those tendencies in Soviet architecture that aim at suppressing the differences between towns and villages by means of a more rational distribution of the agricultural and industrial population.

It should be observed that, like ASNOVA, ARU often bases its methods of work on an abstract



THE PLANNING OF A SQUARE IN MOSCOW. The scheme is planned as a typical square in Moscow, and contains an open space for games, tribunes for demonstrations, a dais for speakers, a wireless station, etc. The scheme shows the tendency of considering the public square from the point of view of the new social relations in the town. (Typical SASS work.)



THE VEL. All-Russian Institute of Electricity dwellings in Moscow, 1931.



THE ELECTRO-TECHNICAL INSTITUTE AT MOSCOW. Architect, Kosnyetsov. A characteristic example of the aesthetic of the SASS group.

symbolism by giving expressive forms to plans for towns. All the same, in proportion as its guiding principles become more definite, and the socialist programme of construction requires more immediate and concrete solutions, ARU is adopting an attitude which approximates more and more to that of Marxian dialectic.

The practical work of ARU is chiefly concentrated on problems connected with the building of new towns, villages, agricultural colonies, and the laying out of squares and streets. At the same time it is engaged in teaching inside the schools of architecture. Its students participate in the work of the group, which has the effect of stimulating young architects, and results in bold projects with plenty of initiative. Among the other merits of ARU mention must be made of the fact that this group was the first to apply the cinematograph method to town-planning projects. This method—which was adopted in drawing up the plans for the towns of Autostroy, Magnitogorsk, etc.—undoubtedly offers immense advantages for the study of such interdependent problems as traffic circulation, street lighting, orientation, etc.

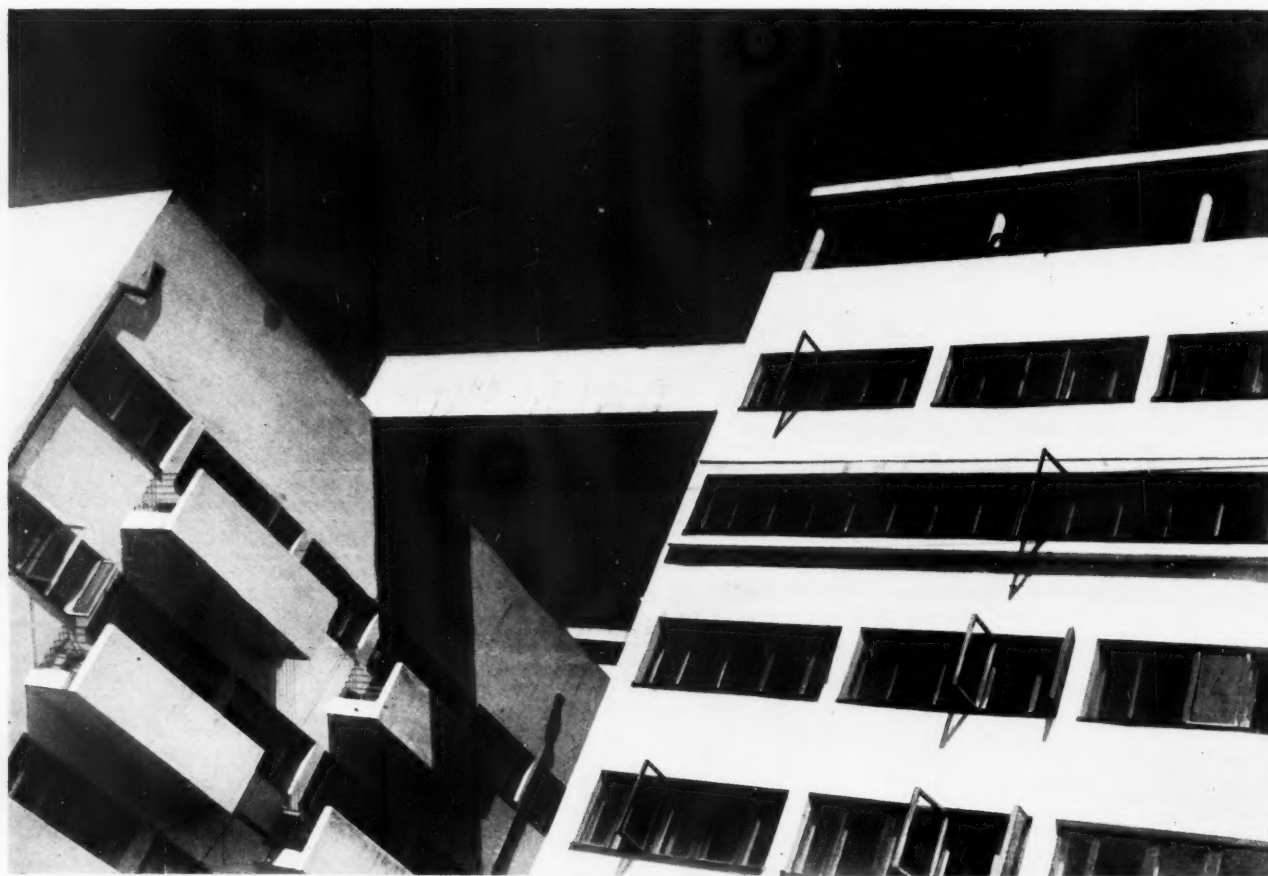
SASS and its Functionalism

The third group, OSA, which has since changed its name to SASS (Section of Architects of Socialist Construction), arose through the defection of a certain number of architects from ASNOVA in 1928.

This is certainly the most radical group among the various Soviet architectural organizations. It is also that which has to meet the most criticisms, and has to defend itself most desperately against a flood of articles attacking its ideology. Analysis of its principles reveals the roots of "Engineerism," technical fetishism, and the usual utilitarian talk of "Constructivism," that date from the communism of the civil war period which has already been described. On the other hand its old pupils have learnt much in the schools and in the years of practical work, which, together with the speeding up of construction, has brought them into closer contact with real problems.

"The architecture of the past," say the functionalists of the SASS, "and more particularly the architecture of the end of the nineteenth century, suffered from a basic dualism. In proportion as 'art work' differentiates itself from architectural integrity, the architect becomes more and more a 'master decorator'; and his methods of work become more and more those of a plastic artist. All notions of aesthetics are lost; or rather a pure cult of aestheticism appears." This state of affairs has not always existed. There were moments in the history of architecture when the methods of the architect were very close to those of the "inventor."

When the cultural and economic life of Ancient Greece was crystallizing, a whole series of architectural forms had to be invented to meet new economic and political conditions. It was thus



THE SVERDLOVSK CENTRAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ADMINISTRATION OF THE URAL DISTRICT.
A typical functionalist aesthetic of the SASS group.

that the Greek temple, the theatre, and the stadium came into being. These were "inventions" in the widest possible sense of the word, since the underlying motive in their general conception, as well as of all their details, was a purely utilitarian necessity. But when once these inventions had been made, and the relations of society had been stabilized, the Greek architect began to differentiate his artistic work more and more, simply because he had no longer anything to invent.

In the same way the Romans, during the constructive period of their history, invented baths, aqueducts, triumphal arches, amphitheatres and circuses. Christianity invented the basilica; the builders of the Gothic style, the stone and glass cathedral; the Middle Ages, the castle; and the Renaissance builders, the palace, the country house, etc.

The new Soviet architecture having formed its methods of work during the period of the establishment of new social relations, and in that of the achievement of socialism, demands from the architect before all else the invention of new types of architecture, of "new condensers" of social life, which shall crystallize the new social and productive relations of the new collectivist society. "We declare that in the epoch of the construction of socialism the architect's rôle is before all else the invention of new types of architecture, of new condensers of the social life."

SASS'S methods of planning resemble those of the engineer-designer. The architect and the engineer have, in fact, identical resources and qualifications: a feeling for space, knowledge of materials, and professional traditions. Indeed, the engineer-designer possesses no other resources, because even technology cannot be considered an exact science since it is entirely based on empirical hypotheses of the resistance of materials. In the new architecture everything must be changed, including the old systems of classification. Is a communal dwelling a habitation or a public building? Is the cinema, with its clockwork alternation of sessions, a public building

or a factory? In a socialist society, is the factory itself a public building or a workshop?

The content of a building is replaced by its function. All the functional ramifications served by architecture can be deduced from simple principles of physico-mathematics and the technique of production. The ideological value of proletarian architecture does not lie in the exterior forms which act on organs of perception, nor yet in rousing the enthusiasm of the masses, training their faculties, and giving them "emotional recharging." Its rôle consists of the scientific functioning, and the spatial organization of the concrete problems involved in the practical realization of socialism.

Starting with the principle that form is a function of different variables, the theorists of the SASS are even able to arrive at the view that content is equivalent to the organization of individual,

collective, and productive existence. From this the repudiation of architecture's claim to be ranked as a branch of the Fine Arts follows as a matter of course. All attempts to influence the spectator by means of the composition of forms address themselves, not to the productivist psychology of the proletariat engaged in building up a life of its own, but to a class-enemy mentality, a consumer's psychology, based on idealist and religious premises.

The SASS group is certainly the most numerous of the various associations of architects, and its theories influence very wide circles of students. It takes a very active part in social life, participates in nearly all competitions and town-planning schemes, and carries out numerous commissions (such as the Narkomfin employees' house, the administrative buildings of the Turksib Railway, the Theatre of the Populace at Harkov, etc.). In the



GENERAL PANORAMA OF THE ALL UNION ELECTRO-TECHNICAL INSTITUTE AT MOSCOW, designed by the architect Kosnyetsov. It is here that all plans for the electric development of the Soviet Union, such as that of Dnieperstroï, are worked out.



OFFICES OF THE EMBA OIL TRUST IN EMBA, KAZAKSTAN.

field of town-planning, this group has adopted Ochitovich's idea for the disurbanization of Russia by the creation of a system of roads bordered by houses, with civic centres for victualling, culture, primary education, and medical relief at stated intervals. These roads would unite the centres of industrial production, which would themselves be surrounded by agricultural zones. SASS demands the abolition of the contradictions between urban and agricultural life, by synthesizing the two into a form of socialistic life based on the relations of collectivist man to nature and production. Up till 1930 SASS edited a review under the title of *Sa* (or *Contemporary Architecture*) in which, while attacking their critics, the theoretical and practical exponents of this group tried to justify their ideology.

WOPRA and its criticism based on the Dialectic Method

In 1929 the WOPRA group (All-Russian Society of Proletarian Architects) was formed. This organization, which according to its own declaration is the only one that consists of exclusively proletarian elements, proclaimed its monopoly of orthodox proletarian ideology. The ideology of WOPRA, which is based on Marxian dialectic, is in opposition to the theses of all the other groups because it undertakes to unmask the deviations of the right and left wings alike, and to denounce *petit bourgeois* opportunism and "idealist tautology" just as much as the doctrines of mechanists.

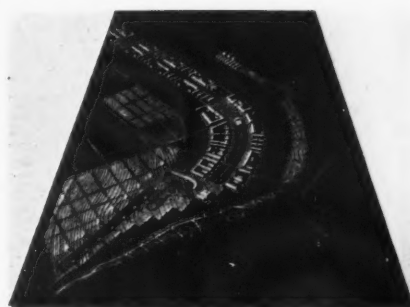
WOPRA'S criticism of ASNOVA and ARU is directed against their aestheticizing symbolism, though it admits that the work of both these groups is approximating more and more closely to the spirit of proletarian ideology. It asserts that ASNOVA'S formalism, with its "spatial logic," its "psychic economics," and its "objective laws" of visual perception, is clearly influenced by the doctrines of class-enemies. WOPRA asserts that it is only too easy to deduce that the methods of ASNOVA, like the structure of its ideology, are derived not from Marxism but from Kant's aesthetic, and the theories of Hilderbrandt, Fiedler, and Wölflin.

ASNOVA declares that "a high degree of formal skill, founded on a profoundly objective basis, ought to be applied to the content of proletarian architecture"; to which WOPRA objects: "We know what this objective method is. It is based on the laws of visual perception, biology and psychotechnics; and is derived from the study of the composition of forms."

The forms elaborated by this objective method serve to clothe the content of Soviet architecture mechanically. Yet the Soviet architect knows perfectly well that there are no "eternal laws" for the composition of forms; that the different styles of the various historic periods had different laws of formal composition; and that these were closely connected with the demands of the subject, class, and social content concerned. We know that in reality the fetishes of "absolute and eternal beauty" are only used to cloak the mediocrity of *bourgeois* art. Thus in the theses of ASNOVA the specifically proletarian content is replaced to some extent by vague universalism and abstract idealism.

But the WOPRA group also attacks the left wing of Soviet architecture, while admitting that it is relatively speaking the nearest to the ideal of proletarian architecture; and that it is more deserving than any other architectural group of the title "Fellow-Wayfarers of the Proletariat." Its attack on the left wing is directed simultaneously against its ideological, methodological, and technical bases.

SASS'S ideology, which is characterized by the denial that architecture is a fine art, and an obstinate refusal to envisage in architecture "a means of inflaming the enthusiasm of the masses by forms," calls forth severe criticism from WOPRA. WOPRA does not hesitate to describe these conceptions as counter-revolutionary, firstly, because if they prevailed, the proletariat would find itself deprived of one of its most incontestably



PLAN OF THE TOWN KARAKALIS, IN ARMENIA. Architects, Alavian and Kotchar, of the WOPRA group.

efficacious weapons, namely, the emotional influence of art; and secondly, because in advancing these doctrines SASS puts itself into open opposition to the theses of the Vzik (the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party), which postulate that it is essential to "inflame the masses with a pathos for industrialization by means of art."

In the domain of method WOPRA insists that the left wing has substituted function for content; or in other words the functional method for the

approach from historical genesis: just as it has replaced dialectic by mechanistic methods. Marxism in no way identifies form with function, but conceives of it as a law of construction, or a manner of exteriorizing the content of an object.

Form is determined by content, but content is not identical with function. The same content may have several functions, etc.

"As long as one seeks to replace content by function, and by the element of organization, one will be unable to grasp the significance of the content as an objective thing having its own genesis and historic motivation. From which it follows that ideology will always be understood as a value mechanically added to form and content."

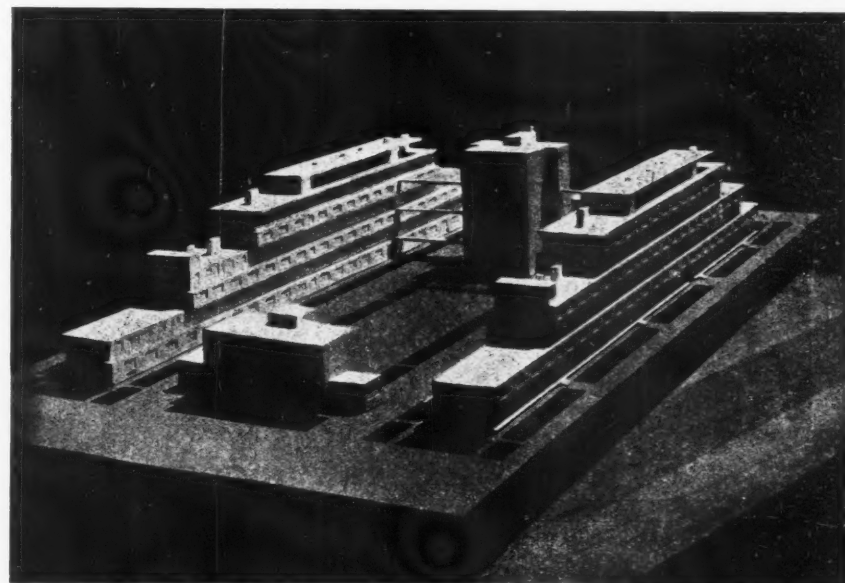
This essentially anti-Marxian and anti-proletarian attitude likewise tends to replace concrete class demands by abstract mechanistic logic. According to WOPRA, if ASNOVA can be described as idealistic in a *petit bourgeois* sense, SASS, which is undeniably on a plane of vulgar materialism, is just as much influenced by capitalistic philosophy.

Rarely can one find an architectural competition in the U.S.S.R. in which the WOPRA group is not represented. The designs are generally rather heavy and of rather doubtful monumentalism, but always ingenious and realistic. Their designs for the Palace of Soviets have created a great deal of interest, although they were not awarded the first prize.

EPILOGUE

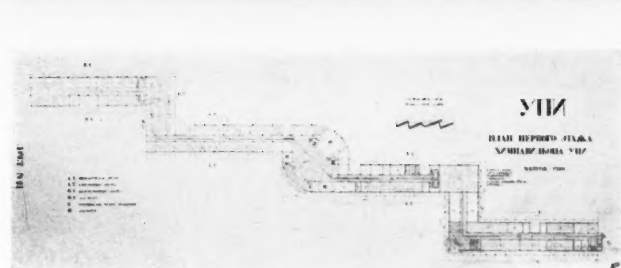
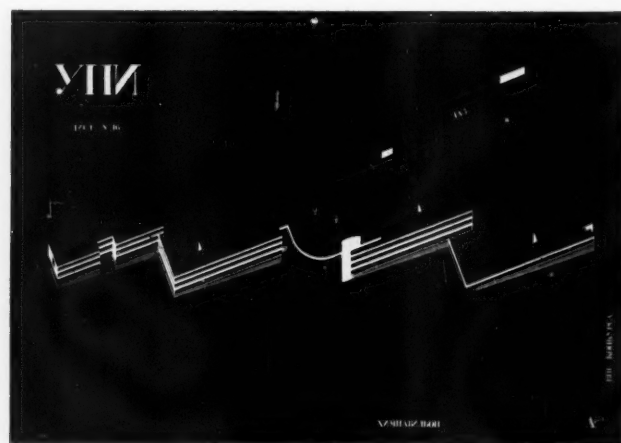
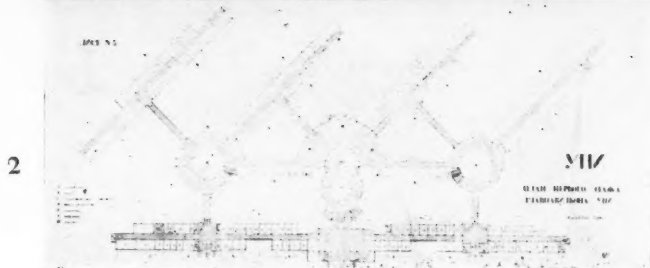
I have tried, in quoting from memory several Soviet authors, to trace briefly the general direction in which the Soviet architectural mind works. Faced with a big social responsibility in the spending of many millions of pounds on the construction of new buildings, the U.S.S.R. would not trust themselves to any *maestro* who proposes with one stroke of his pen to solve all the problems of proletarian architecture.

The problem, indeed, surpasses individual capacity. What is wanted is the creation of a new style in accordance with the demands of the historical moment. The Marxian materialism has definitely swept away the slogans of "absolute beauty," "art for art" and "apolitic art." It has shown all the subjectivism which constitutes their fundament, and which expresses itself in a pure aestheticism. Aestheticism, the admiration of abstractly beautiful things, is characteristic of the *bourgeois* aesthetic, and obviously represents a particular ideology. The application of the criterion "beauty," independently of the hidden contents, is impossible to admit in the system of proletarian aesthetic, and if it is true that "the object we have created imposes, in the future, its influence on us, it is necessary that this influence, at least, should be ideologically true."



A "COMMUNE" HOUSE IN ARMENIA, ERIVANE, by Alavian of the WOPRA group. The centre building contains communal services. In the centre of the foreground is the building for infant welfare, containing crèches, kindergarten, etc.

THREE BUILDINGS BY BERTHOLD LUBETKIN

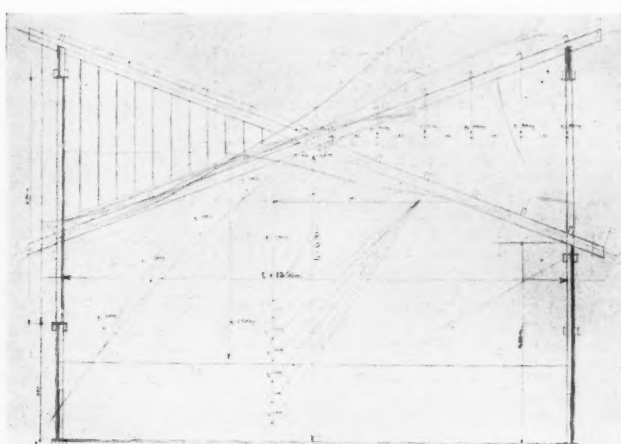
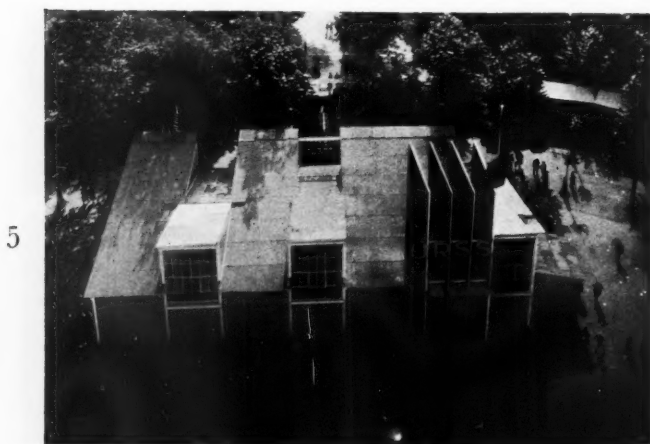


In Russia architecture is trying to arrive at a definite Soviet style from the several camps into which it is at present divided. This has been made clear in the previous article. Amongst the most interesting experiments have been those of M. Berthold Lubetkin, who is one of the well known proletarian architects. Some of his works are illustrated on this page; he is also responsible for the second half of this Issue. It was said of M. Lubetkin that he represents a union between the analytical and scientific European mind with the boldness and originality of an Eastern mind that has been influenced by America.

(1) The Ural Polytechnic at Sverdlovsk. *Architects*, Lubetkin and Dacostalturald. The four arms of the building are draughtsmen's rooms, with special ceiling light. The circular parts are auditoriums of segmental shape grouped together and connected with adequate draughtsmen's rooms. The central tower building is the library. The library is constructed in the shape of a spiral in reinforced concrete, in which the books revolve. The main building is composed of offices, restaurants, reading and smoking-rooms and a large hall. (2) A plan of the polytechnic. The parallel arms containing the studios are all facing north.

(3) The central building of Chemical Laboratories in Sverdlovsk. The condition of the ground made it necessary for the step design. If necessary, each part can be extended by building on the roof of the adjoining department. A gas factory is to be built in the background. The central laboratory of the highest temperature is situated between the two wings. (4) A plan which shows the simple method of intercommunication. The building is divided into several groups, all communicating with each other horizontally as well as vertically.

(5) A general view of the Exhibition Pavilion for the Trade Representation of U.S.S.R. in France, at Strasbourg, Bordeaux and Marseilles. The design has been awarded the Grand Prix. *Architects*, Lubetkin and Volodko. (6) A cross-section of the roof showing the intersection of the various parts of the roof which makes triangular side lighting and ventilation possible. The roof is carried on unsupported beams for 14 yards. This special scissor construction in reinforced wood, which has attracted the attention of specialists, was for the first time applied in this building by the engineer, B. Lubetkin. The scheme was the result of a competition, and Volodko has obtained the first prize for his general idea.



2—Recent Developments of Town Planning in U.S.S.R.

AT the present moment Soviet Russia is persevering in the rapid development of industry and the collectivization of agriculture. This implies a radical change in the technical basis of the economy of the old backward Russia of pre-Soviet days, and the transformation of the country into a powerfully-equipped agro-industrial system.

This great impetus of industrialization has no parallel in history; one result of it is that new centres of production are constantly being created. Their location is determined by such factors as the proximity of raw materials, transport facilities, and to some extent by strategic and climatic considerations.

The change in the social structure of the nation has resulted not only in the growth of new towns, but also in the extension of many existing ones: a state of affairs which brings town-planning problems more and more to the fore.

Karl Marx in his Communist manifesto, F. Engels in his writings on housing problems, and Lenin in his investigation of the agrarian question, have pointed out in many places the importance of the changes which must be made in the distribution of population as a result of the socialist revolution. The gradual disappearance of the great cities, the more rational distribution of the new humanity, the unification of industrial and agricultural production, the transference of education and specialized instruction into immediate proximity with centres of production, the emancipation of women from domestic slavery, and the abolition of the differences between manual and intellectual work, are among the essential basic principles of Soviet town-planning. Each fresh realization in that direction must be considered as a further step in this order of ideas.

In the study of many technical problems Soviet Russia is often obliged to have recourse to the experience of capitalistic nations that are at present in a higher plane of technical development than herself. But owing to the difference of their

social systems foreign solutions can never be applied literally. This is particularly true of town-planning, where technical principles have to be submitted to a very critical examination before they can be adopted in the construction of the new socialist towns. In fact, as the structure of society is entirely different in Russia, Soviet solutions are likewise quite different as far as methods are concerned. We shall attempt, therefore, to examine the actual objective conditions and methods of town-planning that have been adopted in the present phase of building up socialism in Russia.

There is one factor of such primordial importance that it must be considered the basis of Soviet urban development. This is the industrialization of the country by means of electrification.

The importance of electrification was recognized by the Communist Party even in the earliest days of the Revolution. Lenin himself said: "We need electrification as a first sketch of the great economic plan necessary for the establishment of communism."

These words were a whole programme in themselves; and today, after a lapse of thirteen years, the country is beginning to see the results of it. Electrification is making astonishing progress in Soviet Russia. A whole series of power stations have been built under the provisions of the Five-Year Plan, and the country is now being covered with a dense network of distributing lines. In the Moscow district several thermal power stations have been built—such as those at Chatourki, Kachyr, Bobriki, Khamovniki, etc.—run on peat and lignite. In the provinces the number of stations is already considerable. Amongst them should be mentioned the huge Wollwostroi and Dnieperstroi hydro-electric plants.¹ But Soviet

¹ The construction of the barrage for the latter, on which more than 15,000 workmen are employed, has necessitated the submersion of 16,000 hectares of inhabited area. A dyke of a kilometre in length had to be built to raise the level of the waters of the Dnieper by 37 metres. This has rendered the river navigable for the first time in history.



THE GREAT DAM AT DNEPER-STROI.

electrical development is far from being complete. On the contrary the Plan envisages a continuous future extension of electrification, and a corresponding increase in the density of the distributing system, in order that at some far distant date it will be possible to make up for the ultimate exhaustion of certain existing centres of thermal and hydraulic energy.²

The existing towns were for the most part built at points of intersection on the lines for the transport of raw materials and the distribution of fuel. This was the result of the differentiation between the processes of extraction and subsequent working up of raw materials required in industry. The progress of electrification assures a more rational distribution of motive power and at the same time strikes at the roots of the distribution of manufacturing towns up and down the country. It also does away with the uneconomic transport of raw materials containing scrap, and eases the transport of manufactured and semi-manufactured goods. In future, cotton will no longer be produced in the South of Russia to be spun and woven in the industrial regions of the north, and then in part returned to the districts where the raw cotton was originally grown in the form of finished products—(a procedure which needlessly increases cost of production and is an added burden to transport). The electrification of the regions in which cotton is grown will enable cotton goods to be manufactured and processed on the spot.

² In the second Five-Year Plan now in the process of preparation, much attention is to be paid to Central Asia. The electrifying of this region will be used for irrigation, chemical industry and cotton industry. In Occidental and Oriental Siberia two new power-stations are to be built, one in Angara and the other in Enisei. These will have about 40 million horse-power, which is equal to approximately twenty times the power of Dnieperstroi. It has been decided that at the end of the second Five-Year Plan, U.S.S.R. will have 60 to 70 million kilowatts of energy, while America has only 35 million.



THE RED FLAG POWER STATION BUILDING, near Moscow.

The Adopted Policy of Zoning

We see, then, that owing to the rapid electrifying of the country, the question of transport of power no longer predominates in choosing the sites of new towns, because only the raw-materials centres are determining.

The problems connected with the actual planning of the socialist town, as well as with the extension of the existing towns, have been widely discussed during the last few years. Schemes have been published in the daily and professional Press, and have been examined at meetings and special exhibitions. As a result of all this theoretical work, a section of the Communist Academy, which deals with the problem of socialist distribution of the population, has evolved a concrete programme of town-planning, which takes into account all technical and social factors characteristic in the present period of building.

The system can be compared with what is known as "zoning," but it differs strongly from similar schemes in the capitalist country, the differences being easy to understand considering the specific social economic structure of U.S.S.R. In the following we shall try to describe the principal points of this system, which lie at the root of town-planning realization in Russia.¹

The incoherent chaos of capitalist towns—with their anarchical juxtaposition of different quarters, their complete absence of social plan, and their opportunist distribution of population which is the direct reflection of class oppression—must give place to the logical and rational zoning of the socialist town, which assures the best conditions of production and existence. The expansion of the old towns must be arrested at all costs. No new industry must henceforth be allowed to spring up in these centres. Where there are still unexploited reserves of raw materials, satellite towns must be created which have an independent character of their own.

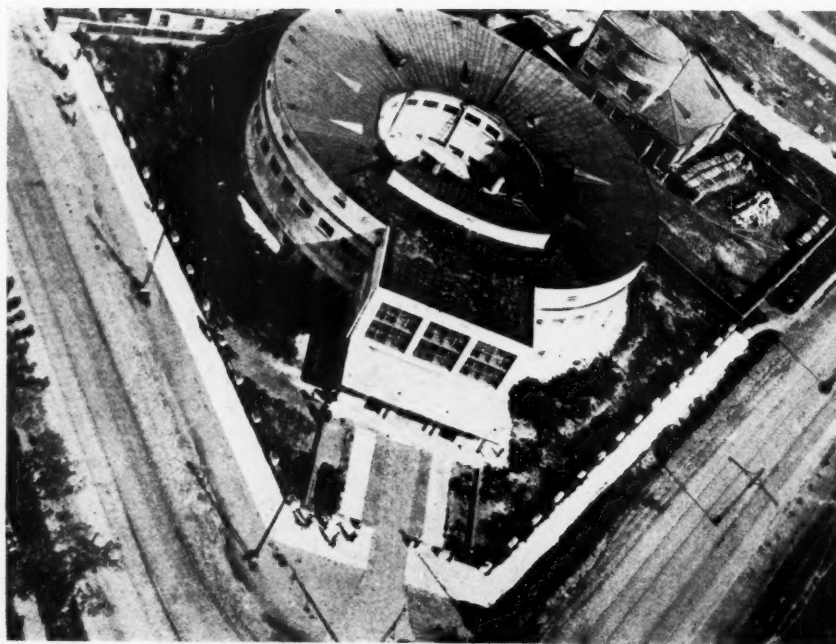
The Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party has accordingly decided not only to refrain from constructing new centres of production in Moscow, but gradually to demolish such existing buildings there as have reached the end of their economic utility, and to lay out parks and squares on their sites at some future date.

The organization of work inside the new towns is entirely subordinated to the needs of production. In this it is diametrically opposed to capitalistic conceptions where markets or business centres are the governing factor. Industrial production is the most important branch of the national economy around which the whole life of a social country groups and organizes itself. Therefore the industrial zone determines the extent and siting of the other zones; and also the lay-out of housing estates and of main subsidiary roads.

Henceforth scientific institutions and the organizations of special instruction will be placed in immediate proximity to the zones of production. By juxtaposition of the centres of work and study a much more immediate contact can be established between the technicians and the workers, and very considerable economy in space can be obtained; thus certain parts of the factories, such as their laboratories, forges and store-rooms, can be utilized for scientific research.

The industrial zone must be separated from the other zones by a belt of verdure at least 500 metres wide. The object of this is not only to safeguard the housing zone from the emanation of dangerous gases, etc., and to create better hygienic and sanitary conditions; but also to facilitate transport, and protect machinery from the dust of the city. This green belt will accommodate an arterial road, clubs, restaurants, etc.; and may only be built over to the extent of 10 per cent. of its superficial area. Infant welfare institutions, such as crèches and kindergartens, must be placed in the housing zone, where they will be surrounded by large open spaces adapted for recreation and sport.

The agricultural zone, with its farms and market-gardens, must be placed behind either the housing



PUBLIC BATHS AT TADJIKISTAN. The water supply here is very difficult to obtain, as this Republic is surrounded by desert land.

or the industrial zone; and likewise cut off by a green belt. In planning these zones it is essential that the whole lay-out should be based on what is one of the capital principles of the socialist state: the abolition of the specific differences between the urban and rural proletariats. For this reason it is necessary to envisage the possibility of the factory workers living together with the labourers on the *kolhozes* (or collectivist farms) so as to pave the way for the ultimate unification of industrial and agricultural production.

The dispensaries, clinics, and surgeries ought to be distributed partly in the housing zone, and partly in the industrial zone. The hospitals, while remaining within the confines of the towns, would be surrounded by a sufficient expanse of verdure. Incidentally, these hospitals will be of the "poly-medical" type; that is to say, they will combine the functions of a clinic, a medical school, and various medico-scientific institutions.

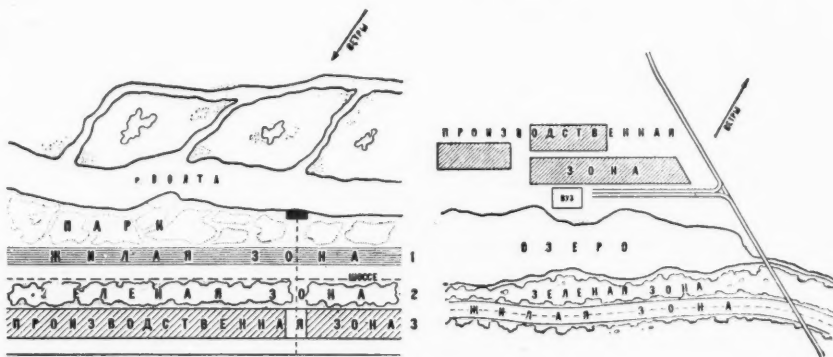
The most favourable conditions for production,

transport, social life, education, and instruction can be created by this kind of zoning, as well as the necessary environment for the reconstruction of social relations on the basis of the new collectivist culture.

A lay-out of this type would also appear to be the most economical as regards contour-planning, main-drainage, provisions, etc.

Professor Milutin has proposed the following scheme for planning a city based on the decisions of the Communist Academy:—

- (1) An industrial zone served by railway which permits of its future extension.
- (2) A green strip with an arterial roadway in the middle of it.
- (3) A housing zone containing the public and administrative buildings, blocks of flats, infant-welfare centre, and primary schools, etc.
- (4) A zone of parks providing facilities for sport, rest and culture.
- (5) The agricultural zone of the *kolhozes*.



(Left) A SCHEME FOR A SOCIALIST TOWN, for the tractor factory in Stalin-grad, by Professor Milutin. (1) Housing area; (2) green area, containing the main road; (3) industrial area and railway. The town is separated from the river by a park. The arrow shows the direction of the wind. (Right) PLAN OF MAGNITOGORSK, by Professor Milutin. On the north side of the lake is the industrial area, on the south the "green" area and the housing district. This is a typical example of the change necessary in a precedent scheme when the housing area cannot adjoin the industrial district. A main road had to be made to join the two parts.

At the end of the branch of this road stands the University.

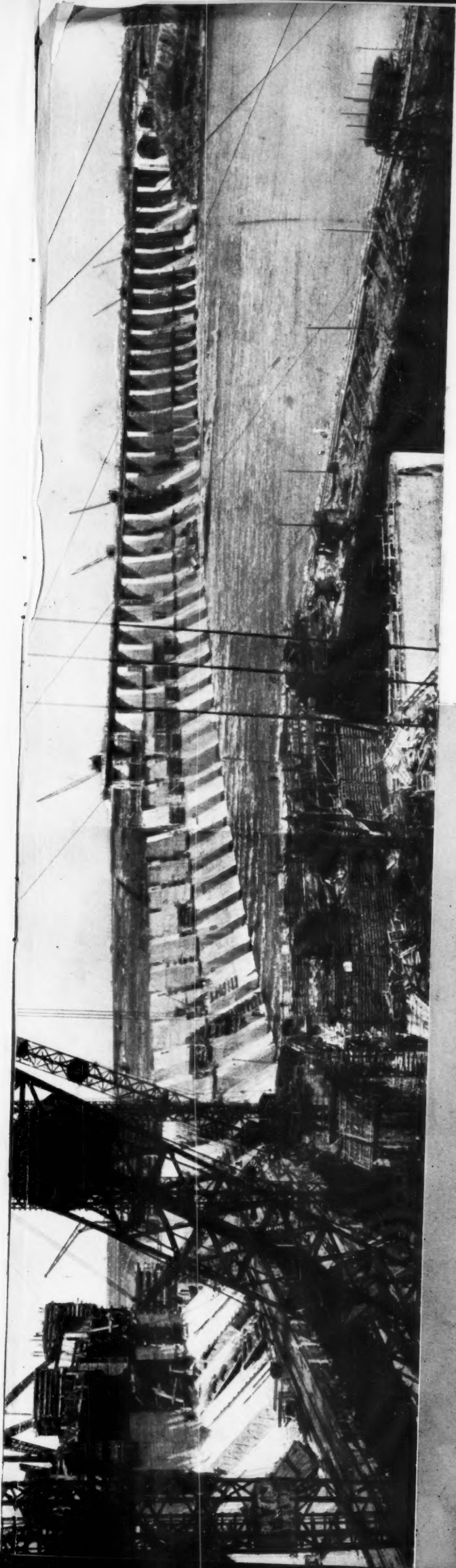
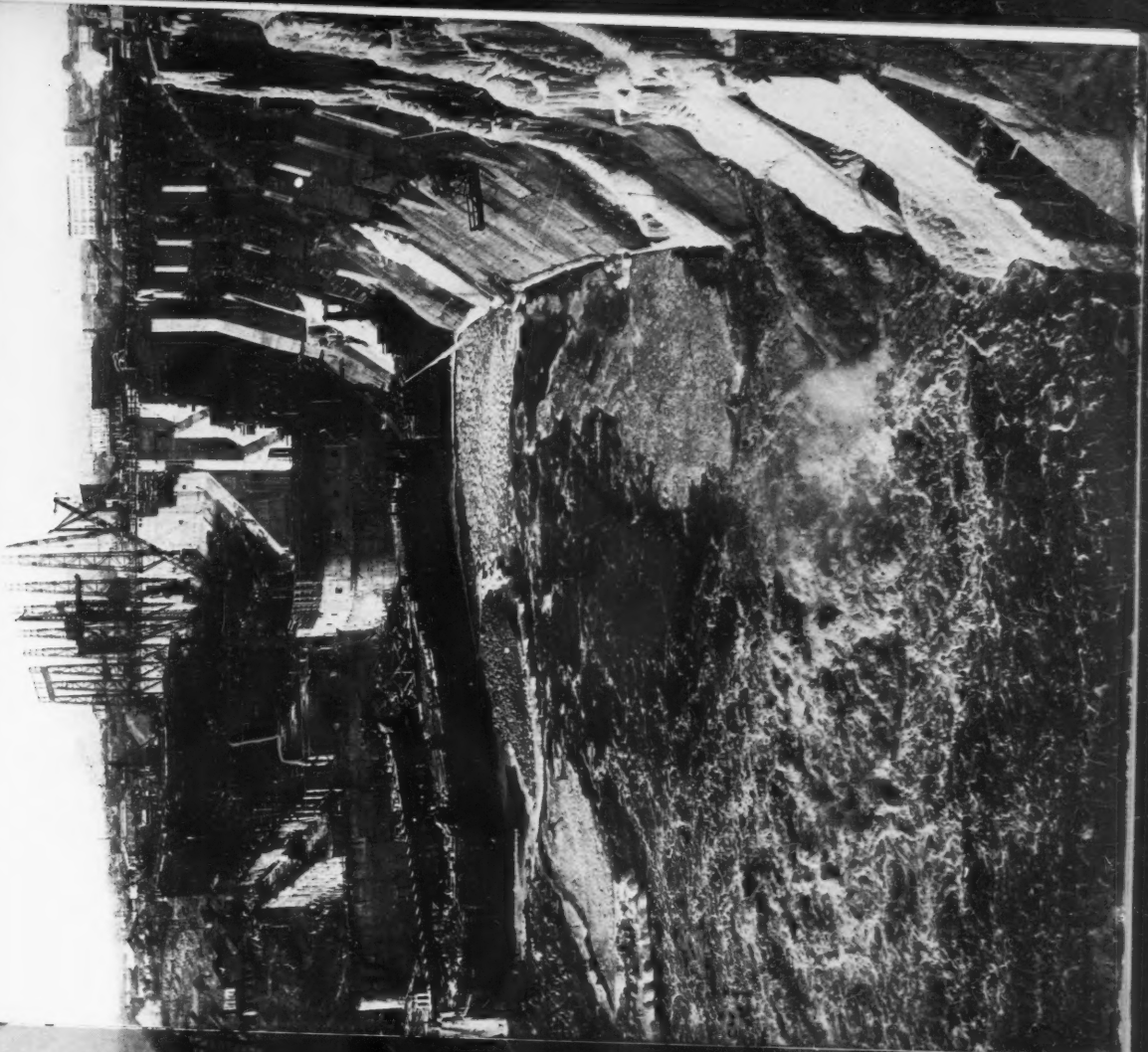
¹ There are several organizations of architects and engineers dealing with town-planning problems in Russia, but the most important is the Giprogor (State Institute of Town Planning). Many foreign experts are working on the same problem, one of these being Ernst May, the well-known German specialist, with twenty-five German architects assisting him.

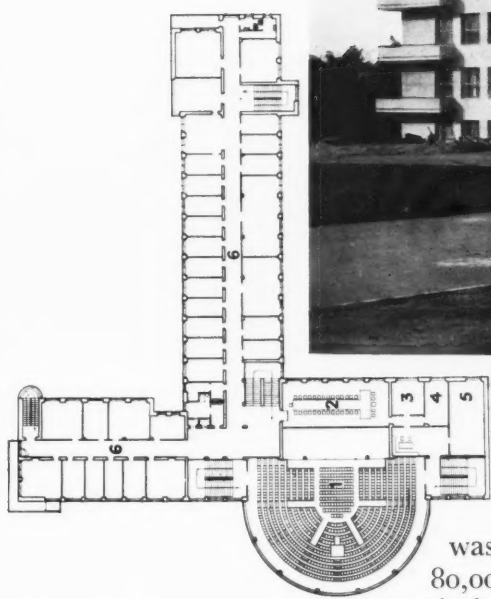
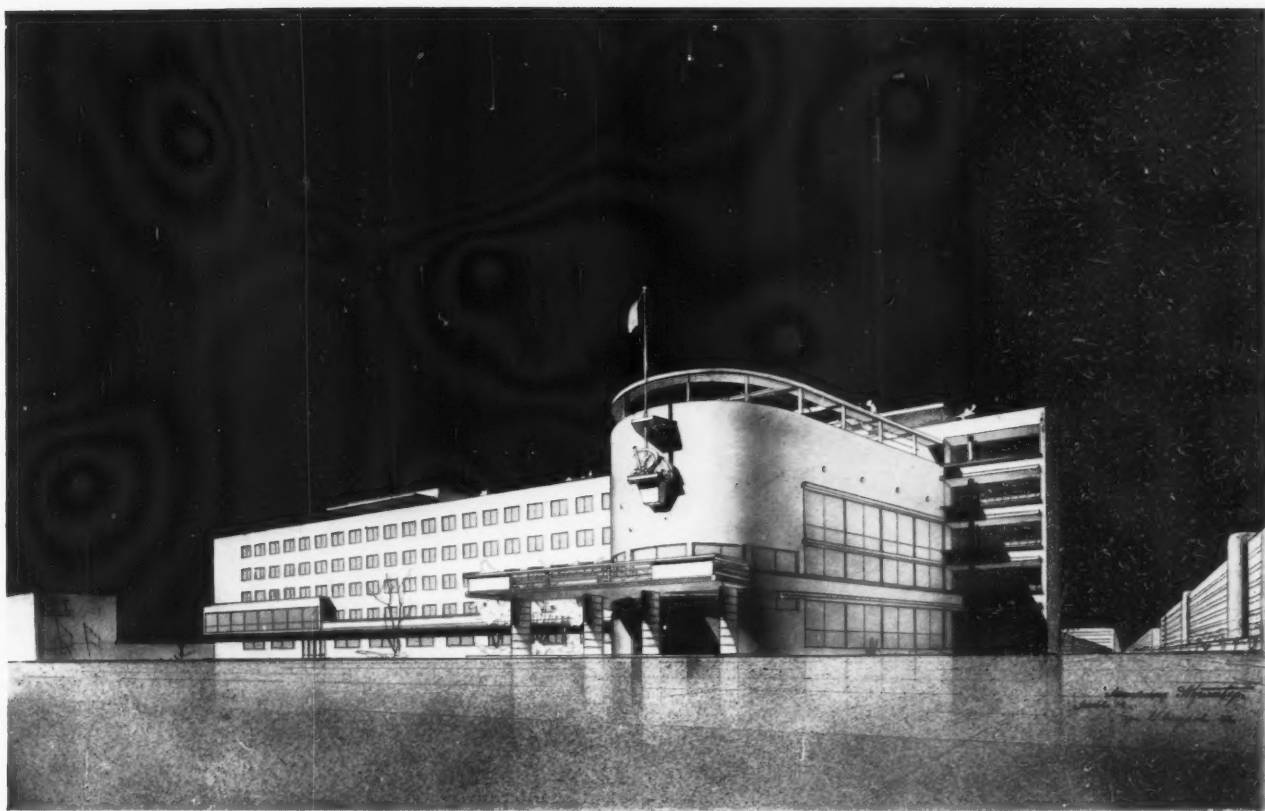


An ice dam at Magnitogorsk.

PLATE VI. *May* 1932.

The facing page. Plate VII. THE LARGEST ELECTRIC STATION IN EUROPE. The dam at Dnieperstroi in construction. When it is finished, 810,000 horse-power electric energy will be obtainable to feed the factories to be built round Dnieperstroi under the new scheme. Three to four million cubic feet of water pass through the 49 sluice gates of the dam every day. It is 744 yards long, will carry two bridges, one for ordinary traffic and trams, and the other for cranes. The dam is built on granite rapids, and will eliminate the difficulties of navigation caused by these rapids by providing three locks for the passage of steamers. Enormous pipes carry the water to nine turbines, whose electricity will feed a newly created industrial district. A similar station projected for the Volga will be eventually twice as powerful, while the two new electric stations at Angorsk and Enessei which are included in the second Five-Year Plan, will give approximately twenty times the power of Dnieperstroi.





Top. A drawing of the House of the Soviet at Novo Sibirsk, by the architect Grinberg. Two years ago Novo Sibirsk was a small provincial town of 80,000 inhabitants; as the new capital of Western Siberia it now contains over half a million. A new theatre by M. Grinberg containing a planetarium and circus arena, and seating 3,000 people, is also being erected there. It is to be faced

with magnificent Ural stones, and, when finished, ought to be one of the best modern buildings in Russia. *Bottom.* The House of the Soviet at Nizhni Novgorod by Grinberg. The rooms indicated on its plan are as follows:—

- (1) The big audience hall which can be used as a theatre hall or as a meeting hall. (2) Conference room of the Council. (3) and (4) Rooms for the President and members of the Council. (5) Recreation room for the Council. (6) The administration wings. The staircase arrangement permits immediate access to the principal departments.

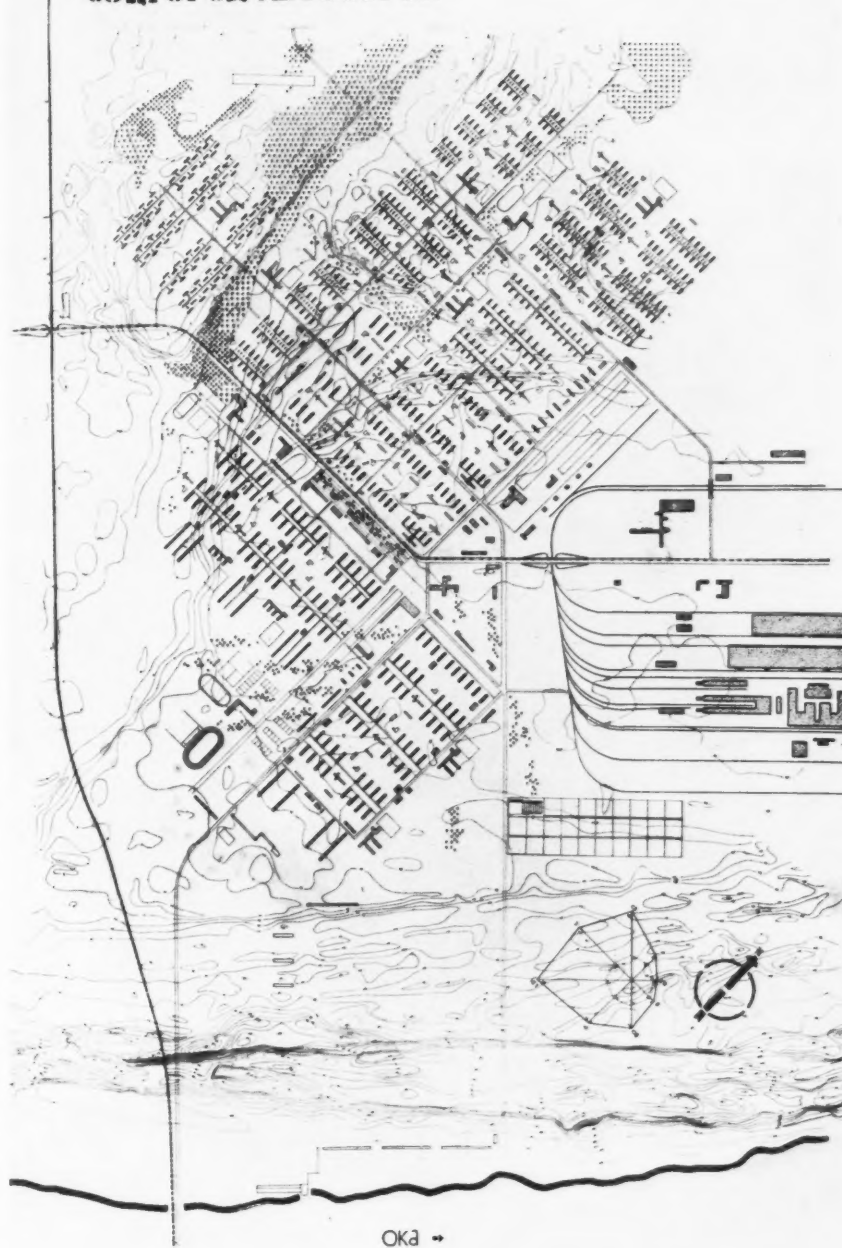
THE PLANNING OF TOWNS

The erection of dwellings in the Soviet Union has not up to the present kept up with the increase in the population, especially in the industrial centres. This neglect is now being made good as speedily as possible. The planning of these new townships has to be prepared. The building materials industry also had to make preparations for these large outputs; the testing of new building materials went hand in hand with this. The individual space for dwelling is consistently restricted but a compensation is offered for this, in that the dwellings are fitted with every conceivable technical equipment, such as main water, drainage, electrical equipment, central heating, and also that the allotted space is amplified by the crèches, kindergarten, restaurants and clubs, which lie close to the dwellings, and also by spaces for playing and sports and rest places. This extension of dwelling facilities at least partly corresponds to the conception of living obtaining here, which is deliberately built up on Marxian principles. As regards collectivity, the communal collective working in factories, as in other industries, such as agriculture, corresponds in non-professional life to the principle of communal dwelling, whereby the dwelling should at least in part be carried out in a collective manner. The strongest impression of this principle is already shown in the "Kommuna," the communal house, which contains, in addition to the individual dwelling-rooms, all the communal devices for kindergarten, crèches, feeding, club rooms, baths, and, perhaps, even a few selling booths. The liberation of the woman from domestic work, which is necessary to the requirements of the programme, is thus realized. The freeing of all fresh working energies is important now for the building of industry, owing to the appreciable lack of labour.

All residents in the new townships have a claim to the same favourable conditions of living. From this follows the standardizing of the dwellings and therefore of the blocks of houses, a circumstance which answers to the requirements of economy in building up, and also the later administration of the townships. A definite organization in the uniform dimensions of the dwelling-houses leads to the optimum size for the children's institutions, feeding-places and other communal arrangements, around which a certain number of the dwelling-houses served by them are grouped. Further collectivity is obtained by the schools and clubs with their playing and sports grounds, and by the economic institutions such as booths, washing-places, and the Banja, or Russian bath, which is generally prized by the natives.

It is a matter for the skill and good taste of the one who has to draw up the plan to ascertain how it is possible for him to maintain this generally devised scheme, by a skilful use of the geographical individualities which are characteristic

СОЦГОРОД АВТОСТРОЙ

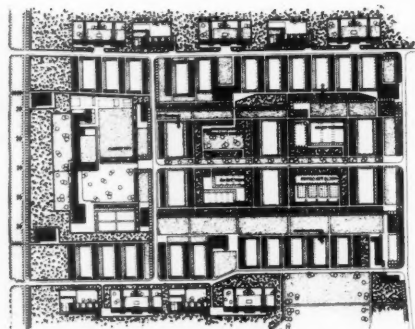
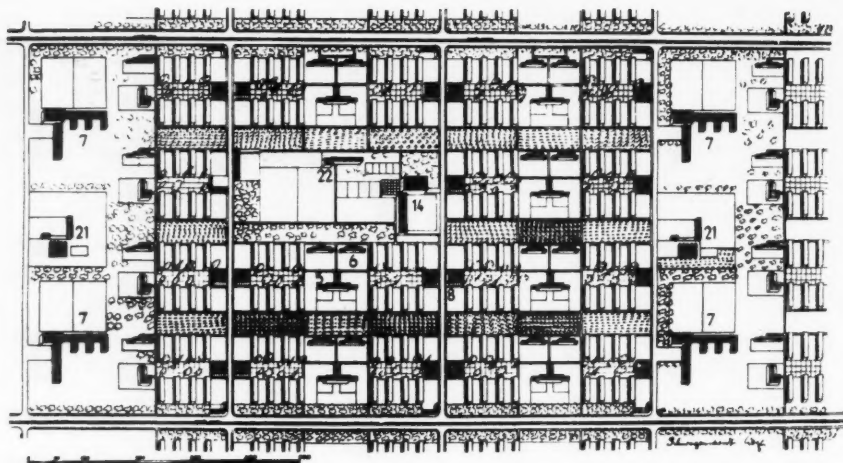


of the site. As may be seen from the plans, use is advantageously made of one arrangement, in which the blocks of houses are to be placed in two rows with their gables towards a small inside yard, from which access is obtained to them. The lowest possible cost of development plays a most important part in this. The arrangement of the rooms and spaces on the inside of such a square provides the garden architect with a great problem, especially as it is rightly required that every living-room shall offer a view of the verdure. The provision of individual gardens for the houses hardly comes into the question with the conception provided. A general garden or park arrangement of so large an area would demand excessively high costs of installation; and even later the community would constantly be loaded with high running costs. A proposal to put aside a portion of the adjacent spaces for the cultivation of vegetables, and thus make them yield a small quota of usefulness, is at the moment under lively discussion.

THE PLANNING OF TOWNS



The "Socialist city" of Nizhni-Novgorod, showing a housing scheme in construction (see also Plate IX and page 211).



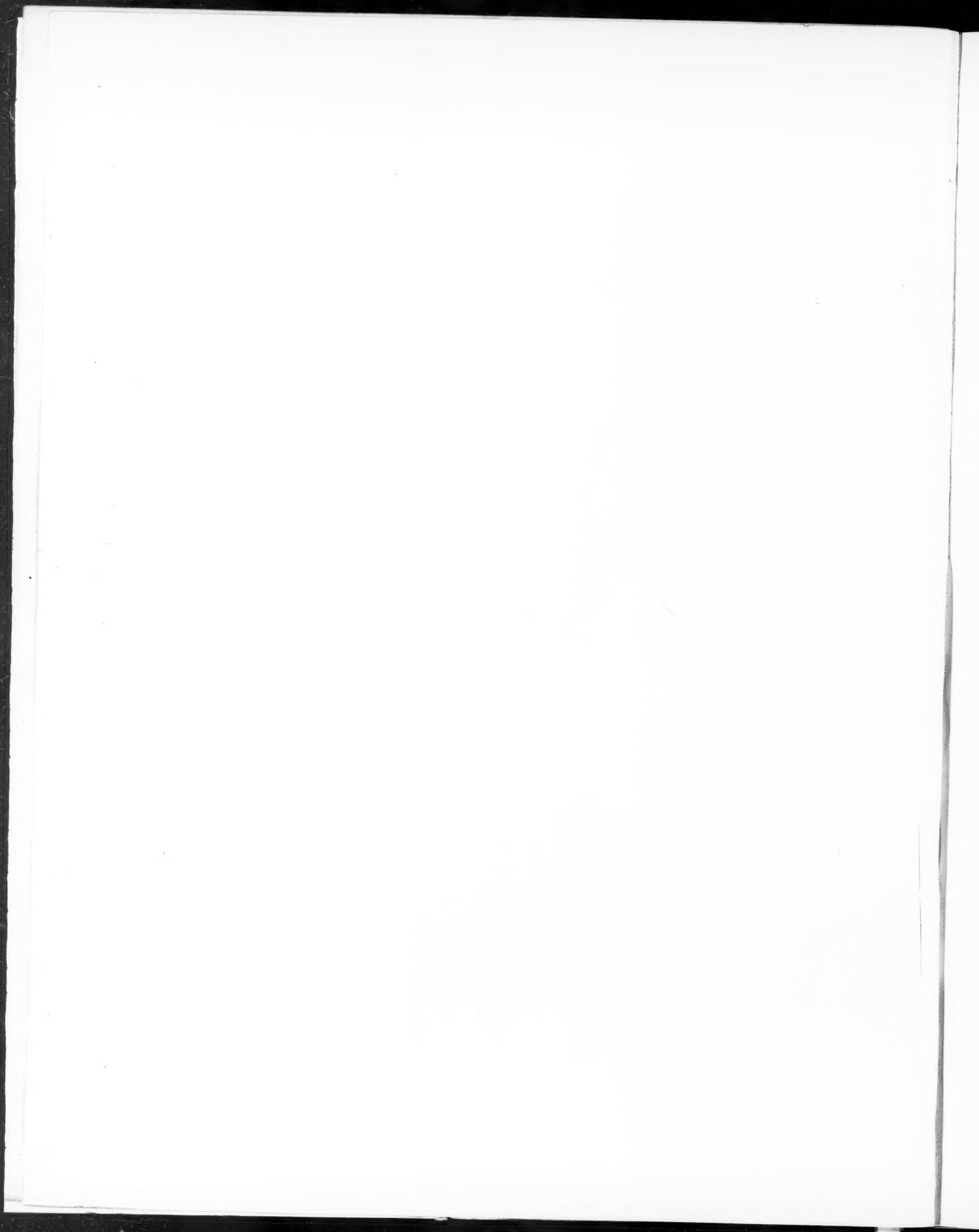
(Above) Plan of one of the housing quarters of Magnitogorsk. The town is divided into roads of communication, and roads in the housing district. The blocks of houses are on the roads running from north to south. In the centre of the town are playing fields, at the north and south crèches, kindergarten and all infant welfare institutions. The large building on the west is a school. The parks are laid out as follows: *Gardens*, 14,700 square metres, 18.3 square metres per person.

Market Gardens, 28,390 square metres, 3.54 square metres per person. *Playing Fields*, 25,000 square metres, 3.12 square metres per person. *Places of Rest*, 103,830 square metres, 13 square metres per person. *Boulevard*, 1,800 square metres, 2.72 square metres per person. *Land Surrounding the Crèches*, 17,500 square metres, 32.4 square metres per child. *Kindergarten Playground*, 10,820 square metres, 41.6 square metres per child. *School Playing Fields*, 32,000 square metres, 32.92 square metres per child. (Left) A typical unit of Autostroy. This town is designed on the same lines as Magnitogorsk. The housing blocks are in the same position, with gardens and market gardens between them. No. 7, schools. Nos. 5 and 6, crèches and kindergartens. Nos. 22 and 21, restaurants.



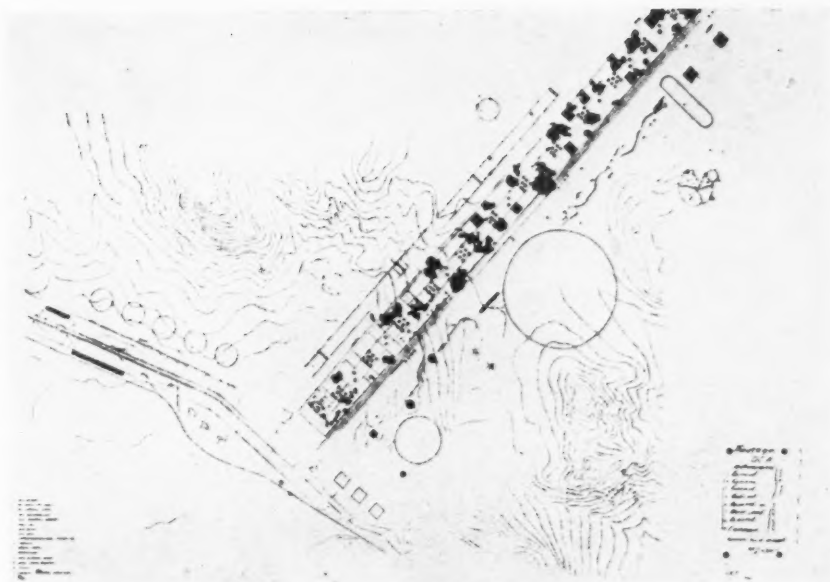
THE FIRST SOCIALIST TOWN. Autostroy, adjoining Nizhni Novgorod, erected to house the workers of the new automobile factory.

PLATE IX. *May 1932.*





PLAN OF MAGNITOGORSK. The principal main road unites the big industrial centre with the collective farms and is about 20 miles long. The houses are along this road. Sets of wooden houses are in chessboard formation. Each group contains eight houses for thirty-two people each. Between the road and the houses are the service houses, clubs, theatres, etc., and between the groups of houses, crèches, schools, etc.



PLAN OF MAGNITOGORSK, which is a typical "ribbon" town. The new scheme, which is designed by May, spreads on to other territory, as the first site was too small.

This type of scheme has been adopted for the new towns during the transitional period. When local topographical, hydrographical or meteorological conditions do not allow such a scheme to be carried out in its entirety, the necessity for communication with the industrial zone by transverse main roads has to be taken into consideration. A very flexible legislation indicates the best solution in each particular case.

This programme, though based on a dialectical study of the problems and possibilities of the moment, is opposed by the Right and Left Wing alike. We must, therefore, try to analyse their respective points of view.

The Right Wing Theory

The ideology of the Right Wing reflects, to quote Stalin's words at the Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party, "the resistance of classes which have seen their day." They try to justify their opportunism by the slogan of "maximal economy." In insisting on the material difficulties involved in the realization of this "Maximal Programme," the Right Wing proposes palliatives that are based simply on the errors of capitalistic planning; and excuses itself with vague promises to review its attitude in the future "when objective conditions permit it," etc. In practical terms,



Interior of a dwelling at Dnieperstoi, showing a group of students preparing a special daily bulletin of statistical and social information.

what it proposes is the extension and regulation of the existing towns on the assumption that culture is only possible in the old historic centres; and the establishment of new industries in immediate contact with the old (for which the pretext is the greater facilities offered for provisioning them).

In opposition to the resolutions of the Central Executive Committee—which discourages the construction of new industrial quarters in or around the existing towns, particularly in or around Moscow and Leningrad after 1932, the Right Wing maintains that this principle of "the extinction of the existing towns" is a dangerous one. It considers that the old towns ought to be allowed to develop, and that it is too early to try and define their extent on the basis of prevailing economic conditions. The limits of their development, it insists, will be fixed in the distant future by "the events of history." It regards the new towns as a phenomenon of secondary importance, and has done its best to discredit them from the first by dubbing them "provincial" and "temporary." For the Right the "quarter" is the primordial element of the town-planner's activity, just as in housing it is obsessed by flats of the *immeuble de rapport* type with their private homes, separate kitchens, etc. (in so far, that is, as the survival of such things is still possible under the collectivist regime). It is only to be expected that the representatives of these counter-revolutionary tendencies should try to justify their reactionary point of view by crocodile tears over the innumerable material difficulties, the need for economy in the present situation. All the same, their arguments remain entirely anti-Marxian, and, consequently, anti-proletarian.

The Left Wing Proposals

The Left Wing of the Soviet town-planners goes to the opposite extreme, and in so doing leave all sense of realities behind them. Immersed in speculative and abstract logic, they demand the immediate realization of the "Maximal Programme" of socialism. This tendency is chiefly represented by the SASS group, with Ochitovitch as its principal spokesman. They have proposed a scheme for the new towns that resembles the longitudinal, or ribbon development. Their argument is as follows:

The growth of socialist economy is closely connected with the continually increasing importance of transport. This implies the possibility of effecting

delivery of materials both to and from certain hitherto inaccessible districts; a possibility which allows new industries to develop in them.

On the assumption that the basis of the regional planning of a given economic territorial unit is a system of nodal agricultural and industrial centres, linked together by main avenues of communication and channels of electrical distribution, it follows that the proper socialistic basis for the distribution of the population ought to be its "attenuation" along their routes. These arterial roads are destined to be the rays of a great cultural and economic development in the near future, because they will facilitate all public services, and more particularly provisioning. The creation of a comprehensive network of roads bordered by houses to cover the whole country will furnish the principal means of abolishing existing differences between the urban and agricultural proletariats. They will also be instrumental in creating the closest possible contact between the workers of the different centres spaced along their routes.

Urban "quarters" are simply the obsolete survivals of capitalistic principles of planning. They represent class and caste prejudices (ghettos, international concessions, West and East Ends, brothel districts), or now superannuated ideas of strategic defence, etc. The side streets in the old towns are unnecessarily long. They were designed solely for the needs of consumption, and are off from the main roads that serve the economic unit constituted by the region as a whole.

The conception of the "quarter" is entirely alien to the socialist mentality.

According to the SASS Group, the Ribbon Town is the only logical means of redistributing the rural population. The abolition of small individual rural properties, and the creation of enormous industrialized agricultural domains, make the building of lines of habitations bordering the limits of the collectivized farms an imperative necessity. In this way alone it is possible to overcome the obstacle of distance separating the worker's home from his place of work.

It is also untrue to pretend that the development of culture is only possible in the great cities. Lenin had already formulated this problem when he said that contemporary technical progress allows the latest "achievements" of science and art to be enjoyed by the most distant inhabitants of our country. This is only another way of saying that we ought to concentrate our efforts on the creation of new systems of "cultural revictualing," so as to be able to assure a uniform distribution of the benefits of culture to all the workers of Soviet Russia.



A panoramic view of THE CITY OF DNEPERSTROI in construction.

If we take into account that in future industry will be a system which synthesizes manual and intellectual work, it follows that the centres of production will also be centres of science, education, and polytechnic culture as well.

In this way all the different nodal points associated with the technical development of a certain industry will also be centres of specific scientific and cultural activities. These centres will be more or less uniformly distributed throughout the country, and will ensure the abolition of the historic pre-eminence of the great cities.

The rational distribution of parks, open spaces for rest and recreation, sports grounds, cinemas, theatres, etc., throughout the different sectors of the housing zones will bring the consumer into closer contact with cultural institutions.

But the principal advantage of the Ribbon Towns, which entitles this system to be called a truly socialistic one, is the abolition of domestic economy, and, as a logical consequence, the consistent furtherance of the collectivization of the population.

The adherents of this longitudinal disurbanization are ready to concede that the temporary survival of the individual home can be dialectically justified for the transitional period but they insist that it is impossible to tolerate the continuance of individual households in the new towns.

The cardinal principle of collective services is its regional, "anti-home" character as regards everything connected with consumption and provisioning. The "basic points" of its system of distribution to the consumer are placed at rational intervals (though these are different for each of the different types of public service) with due regard to the particular local requirements of the region concerned. The system consists of: (1) Points of production, where products are prepared for consumption; (2) stores and distributing centres for these products; (3) centres of consumption.

The positions of the centres of production are fixed in accordance with the general laws governing the production of the country as a whole in so far as such questions as location, output and supply of raw materials are concerned. On the other hand, the centres of consumption are placed as close as possible to the various groups of consumers they are intended to supply, so as ultimately to permit distribution to the collective dwellings themselves.

The main roads will act as arteries for the provisioning of the whole region. This eminently flexible system guarantees the possibility of future extensions, and is equally adaptable for all regions, irrespective of their present level of economic and technical development. It must be regarded as presenting a comprehensive complex of all the economic and cultural services of society, since it provides for:

- A system of roads, and other forms of transport.
- A system of communications (postal, telegraphic, telephonic, etc.)
- A system of housing.
- A system of provisioning.
- A system of hygienic and sanitary services.
- A system of distribution for articles of general consumption.
- A system of elementary socialist education (infant welfare).
- A system of polytechnical education.
- A system of cultural and politico-social services.
- A system of physical culture, including tourism.
- A system of medical services (dispensaries, clinics, hospitals and sanatoriums).

According to the SASS group the whole problem of the socialist distribution of the population can be considered, thanks to this solution, as a dialectic process of disurbanization; a process based on the idea of a perpetually changing Ribbon Town which

will promote the growth of a socialist sector, and thereby accelerate the disappearance of the remains of individualist economy and culture.

Criticism of the Ideas of the "Opposition"

In the course of innumerable discussions it was recognized that the plan put forward by the SASS group contained very interesting suggestions, and went a long way towards the solution of problems involved. All the same the system of longitudinal distribution was officially characterized as uneconomic in its application to circulation of traffic, provision for the needs of transport, and main drainage; and unrealizable as a whole under the conditions likely to prevail during the transitional period. In proposing these decidedly radical solutions, the SASS group failed to take into account the material difficulties that have to be contended with at the present moment, such as the still inadequate technical equipment of the country and the stage of the social development of the workers.

The family has almost entirely disappeared in Soviet Russia as a productive unit; but it still exists as a unit of consumption, although its separate economic existence is in gradual process of liquidation. This is a fact which it would be both absurd and dangerous to deny. The decision registered by Vzik, the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party, in 1930, defined the standpoint

of the Government. While condemning Utopian attempts inspired by the desire to realize "complete and immediate socialization," they say: "It is impossible to overcome centuries-old impediments which are the result of the cultural and economic backwardness of society at one bound. Yet this is precisely the policy implied in these (anyhow at present) unrealizable and Utopian plans for the construction at the expense of the State of new communist towns embodying the complete collectivization of existence—including collective provisioning, infant education, and the legal prohibition of family cooking. The precipitous realization of such Utopian and doctrinaire schemes—which take no heed of the material resources of the country, or to what extent the population, with its existing habits and preferences, may be prepared for them—might easily result in substantial losses, and even discredit the fundamental principles of the socialistic reconstruction of society. Architects must avoid the danger of remaining in the domain of the fantastic, because an adequate solution of the problem can only be forthcoming from an architect who understands the life and social conditions of the masses."

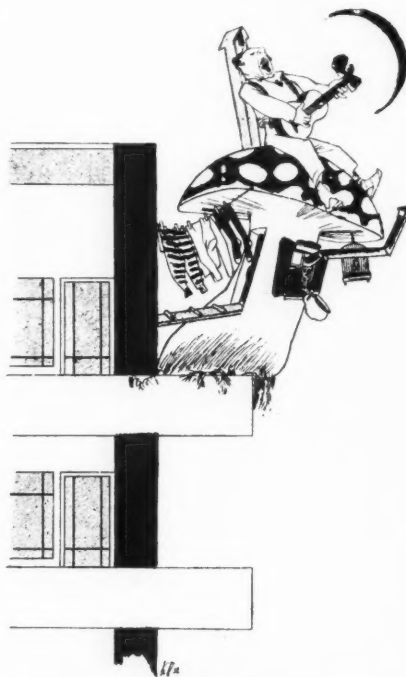
All that is necessary is that during the transitional period a means should be found to enable the family to transform its existence on a collectivist basis. But merely mechanical solutions, such as those proposed by administrative decree, will endanger the success of this movement. The development of the socialist sector can be encouraged and protected by a proper organization of the collectivist services, such as communal kitchens, laundries, crèches, infant schools, etc. The advantages which will accrue in future from the liquidation of the family as a unit of domestic economy will be indeed immense:

- (1) An increase in the well-being of the worker owing to the fact that female labour will be better employed and better paid.
- (2) An increase in the numbers of industrial and agricultural labourers.
- (3) A decrease in the population of the towns, owing to the fact that there will be a decline in the number of women not engaged in productive work of nearly 50 per cent.
- (4) A reduction in the cost of construction of dwellings owing to the suppression of separate kitchens, and other domestic services hitherto provided for in every home.

But this process must be allowed to take its course gradually, according to dialectic laws. It must be borne in mind that socialist town-planning, unlike capitalistic, is free to adopt measures spread over a long period of time, without being constrained, as in countries where an anarchical social system prevails, to have recourse to temporary and not co-ordinated solutions of a ridiculous and purely makeshift character.

All the same it would be unjust to conclude from this, as the opportunists of the Right Wing seek to do, that the programme of Maximal Propagation for the collectivization of the new towns within the limits of possibility is one that ought to be abandoned.

On the contrary, Soviet town-planners ought to keep this objective consistently in sight in all their efforts. The policy of the collectivization of all services, including housing, in the new towns, ought to be pursued methodically. This can be done by intensifying the socialist sector of production and existence in every way possible, and by including in it ever larger and larger sections of the population, who will willingly join the new communist sector attracted by the numerous advantages which it has to offer. But at the same time it is equally necessary to recognize the possibility that during the transitional period certain groups of workers can, if necessary, continue to live in separate dwellings on the basis of individual domestic economy.



AN "INDIVIDUALISTIC SUPER-STRUCTURE" ON A COLLECTIVE HOUSE as seen by The Crocodile, a Russian humorous paper.

MARGINALIA

THE WHY & THE WHEREFORE OF MODERN TRAVEL

From a Russian Correspondent.

From the northern seas, teeming with silvery herrings, to the cigar-factories of Havana, where knock-kneed negresses still work in gangs; from the greenest capes on earth to our own West Pole, man, *homo sapiens*, is continually on the move: or, if you prefer it, is perpetually and restlessly travelling.

SPAIN for Luxuriant Colour and Romance!

EGYPT for Mystery!

SWITZERLAND for Winter Sport!

AUSTRALIA for 12,000 Miles of the World's Most Perfect Bathing Beaches!

RAROTONGA for a Complete Change from Civilization!

As there are certainly people who would be prepared to go to Soviet Russia for some unique, or specially exciting, kind of hunting, why not go to Soviet Russia for its "IDEOLOGY"?

If Thos. Cook & Son, Ltd. are to be believed we ought to try and see mankind from a fresh angle every time we visit a country that is new to us; and also to endeavour to take its individual peculiarities into consideration. In other words when we are in Rome we should do as the Romans do. Knowledge and sympathy, invaluable acquisitions in themselves, are the reward of foreign travel (*vide* Messrs. Thos. Cook & Son, Ltd.'s free leaflets on Conducted and Independent Continental Tours).

After all, one does not go to the Canary Islands to hear the nightingales.

"Scientific books and magazine articles are for ever announcing either the imminent destruction of humanity, or else some impending crisis in its evolution. It is a significant fact that, however different their outlook, those minds who are now trying to discover a new equilibrium for the world are all at one in seeking the same goals: the reorganization of society on some basis that will liberate the individual from the trammels which enmesh him, and the re-foundation of humanist culture. These ideals are gradually becoming the sheet anchor of the entire youth of Europe.

"The inevitable is already in process of accomplishment. A united Europe will soon be ranged against the absurdity of allowing existing anachronisms to continue. Let us make up our minds as to what we really want, and set to work to bring into being those institutions which a properly co-ordinated world calls for. We know that this order of ideas, when calmly

expounded, merely earns us the contempt of the so-called "well-balanced minds," and elegantly sceptical intellectuals, obsessed by a sense of relativity, who are only too ready to understand everything, admit everything, and defend everything; just as, in the last resort, they are ready to submit to everything.

"At the present moment we have to make our choice between a fruitless reiteration of the glaring evidence of the decadence which confronts us at every turn, and the initiation of some vigorous line of action calculated to arrest it."—(P. LAMOUR.)

Though faced by the gravest technical difficulties, Soviet Russia, which lives in a stimulating atmosphere of perpetual struggle, has drawn up a Plan for the complete reorganization of society. One by one the obstacles that impede its realization are being courageously overcome.

Shall we adopt this Plan; or shall we reject it? That is the question.

Let us begin simply by studying it.

And if we choose to go to the palm-fringed Cook Archipelago, for its Polynesian enchantment and unspoilt coral-island charm, that is surely no reason why we should refrain from going to Soviet Russia for a first-hand view of the spectacle of a new civilization in process of creation.

But if, as some pretend, darkness will descend on the earth before the new light has had time to start shining . . . Well, then, in that case, better go to Norway for the Midnight Sun!

* * *

FRENCH ARCHITECTS' VISIT TO RUSSIA

In connection with the Architectural Congress to be held in Moscow in August, *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* is arranging for a party of not more than thirty French architects to go to Russia to attend this conference. The tour will start about August 28, and will last for eighteen days, of which twelve will be in that country itself. Two days will be spent in Leningrad, four in Moscow, for the actual congress, one in Kharkov, two in Rostov sur Don, one in Dneprostroi, and one in Kiev. At each of these places a tour will be made in cars, accompanied by a French-speaking guide, who is also an architect. In France, Germany and Belgium the journey will be made in wagons-lits, and in Russia in "wagons rembourrés," which are turned into bunks at night. Three well-served meals a day, excluding wines, are provided, and visits to museums, clubs, factories, theatres and music-halls and cinemas are arranged for. All the formalities as regards visas of passports in Germany and the U.S.S.R. are pre-arranged, with no cost to the members. Full particulars can be obtained from *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, 5 rue Bartholdi, Boulogne. The inclusive price for the tour is 6,400 francs per person.

215

ITEM OF RUSSIAN NEWS

We learn that the only factory to develop in Russia under the Five-Year Plan is the Leningrad spat factory!

* * *

ARCHITECTS, BUILDERS AND DESIGNERS TOURS TO SOVIET RUSSIA, 1932

SIR,—May we call the attention of your readers to an alteration in the date of the above tour, which this Society, in co-operation with the Design and Industries Association, is arranging this summer for architects?

Two tours for Architects, Builders, Designers and Members of Local Housing Authorities, to see present activities in Building and Industry, and to meet Soviet architects and responsible authorities, are being arranged to leave London, by boat, on July 9 and August 6, 1932. The inclusive cost will not be more than £35 16s. (inclusive of return fares, hotels, tips, food, theatres and interpreters), the time being about three weeks from departure to return to London (Leningrad, Moscow, Nijni-Novgorod, Volga boat trip to Stalingrad), arriving back in London approximately August 3 and August 31 respectively.

Each party will consist of not more than 25 persons, and a booking fee of £1 will be payable to the Society on completion of the application form. All particulars, application forms, etc., may be obtained from the Secretary, Society for Cultural Relations, 1 Montague Street, W.C.1 (Museum 5254), and from the Secretary, Design and Industries Association, 6 Queen Square, W.C.1 (Museum 2521).

CLOUGH WILLIAMS-ELLIS.
RUTH E. MANSELL-MOULLIN,
Chairman.

* * *

WALL DESIGNS

An exhibition of designs for mural paintings, opening on May 23, is being held at Carlisle House, Carlisle Street, W.1. The instigator of this exhibition is Ronald Fleming, and among the twenty-eight artists whose work will be shown are Oliver Messell, Len Lye, E. McKnight Kauffer, John Banting, Boris Anrer, Rex Whistler, and Allan Walton.

* * *

AN APOLOGY

The illustration of Waterloo Bridge, by Mr. H. C. Reid Hide, appearing on page 127, and on the cover, of the April issue of *THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW*, was very kindly lent to us by Messrs. B. T. Batsford; it originally appeared in Richardson's *Monumental Classic Architecture*, published by that firm. We much regret that this acknowledgment was omitted.

d 2

An Architect visits the Ideal Home Exhibition

By F. R. S. Yorke

THE Daily Mail, as promoters, again take the credit for providing us with the only exhibition at which there is any sense of control and disciplined arrangement. Olympia, with its several halls, is by no means easy to lay-out architecturally when the maximum area of stand accommodation is demanded, but this year the incorporation of a subsidiary main avenue in the Grand Hall, running obliquely from the central fountain, forms a connecting link with the National Hall which makes for a homogeneity previously lacking.

About the Grand Hall there is a sense of uniformity and coherent design, and a splendid sense of spaciousness, accentuated by the low stands and the pillar of light which towers to the roof above the main staircase at the focal point of the scheme. Mr. Tanner, the exhibition architect, has arrived at a good standard on which he bases his units, and has contrived, with success, to relieve a possible monotony by carefully considering the application of this to the individual stand. There are, and this is particularly important, none of the "dead ends" and depressing corners so noticeable at the recent B.I.F.

Exhibitors are long in learning the art of showmanship. The stands are too often overcrowded, and as a consequence restless, and in effect fatiguing, especially in cases where an attempt has been made to decorate backgrounds in a "modernistic" manner.

Difficulty is naturally encountered in the endeavour to persuade exhibitors to put aside their little jealousies and prejudices, and conform to a uniform stand, well designed, economical in construction, and suited to an inexhaustible variety of displays, in which the appeal is made through the goods on show rather than by the ornamental surround. Towards this end the architect has worked for several years, and is this year a step nearer to his ideal. Only one prodigal has crept into the main section of the 1932 Exhibition, though in other parts of the show there is still a tendency for the exhibitor to inscribe his pedigree, with other uninteresting details, on the facia which, it is contended, should be reserved for the name alone.

The architect's aim has been the production of a spectacle, The City of Light, and to this end the immense semicircular "east" window of Olympia—designed forty-eight years ago, but hitherto concealed by a backcloth—has been cleaned and is flooded with light at night, when the Grand Hall is transformed into an indirect colour lighting display on a huge scale.

A conglomeration of conflicting lighting units near the ground is avoided by the prearranged supply of ample light for each stand; goods placed near the gangways are illuminated from above by lighting points incorporated in the stand soffits.

ARCHITECTS' ROOMS

The Architectural Association is to be congratulated on the excellence of the Architects' Rooms, which are, for the architect at least, the most interesting feature of the exhibition. They are calculated to give the lay public some idea of the advantages of consulting a specialist, and in contrast with the majority of exhibits they should do much to stimulate in the public mind a favourable regard for the architectural profession.

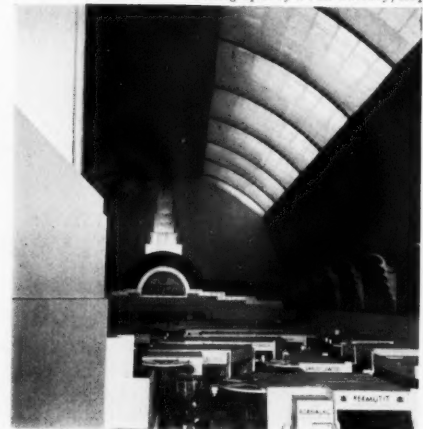
The promoters deserve a share in the laurels, for, I understand, feeling the exhibition incomplete without some recognition of the architect's function in the ideal

home, they have given the stand space to the A.A.

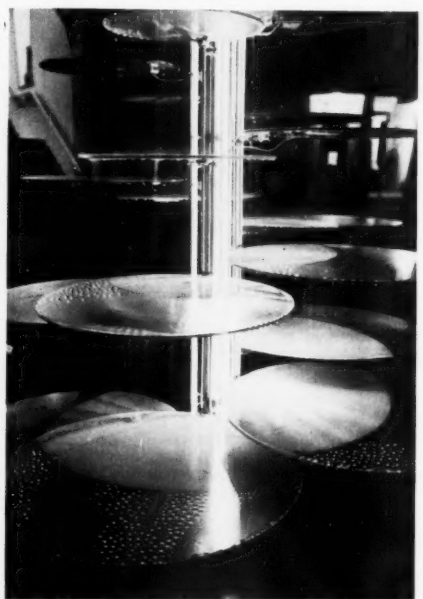
Four rooms, in series, entirely open on one side, and linked by wide apertures which lend to the suite a pleasingly open appearance, comprise hall, designed by Mr. C. H. James; sitting-room by Mr. Knapp-Fisher; dining-room by Mr. G. Grey Wornum; and garden terrace by Mr. L. H. Bucknell; and though four designers each contribute a room, there is perfect harmony in the ensemble.

One notices immediately the interesting and intelligent use which has been made of new and modern materials and appliances. The sides of the hall are lined with a very thin veneer of wood on paper, and the floor is covered by Nabrisina

Photographs by F. R. Yerbury, Esq.



THE MAIN HALL looking from the gallery towards the Addison Road entrance. An orange and black velarium is suspended from the glazed barrel vault.
Architect: Douglas Tanner.



A FOUNTAIN AT THE FOOT OF THE CENTRAL STAIRCASE. Coloured "Neon" lighting tubes rise vertically about a chromium-plated rod to form the central member, and around them are arranged circular plates of glass diminishing in size towards the top.

Designer: Douglas Tanner. Craftsmen: The Bective Electric Company.

inlaid with aluminium; the staircase is of the same material, with black marble for the risers.

The sitting-room floor is covered with large squares of Drytone plywood, grey in colour, and the walls are faced with veneered white mahogany, which forms a splendid foil to a quite lavish use of brilliant colour in the rugs and furnishings. The source of heat is a standard model Ferranti electric fire.

The dining-room, which is open to the terrace, is panelled with polished Venesta plywood, cut in trapezium form, and bevelled at the edges. The wood is veneered with birch of an ivory colour, and on the bevels Mrs. Wornum has painted a design in tulip green. The floor is laid with Triolin, which somewhat resembles polished linoleum; an excellent

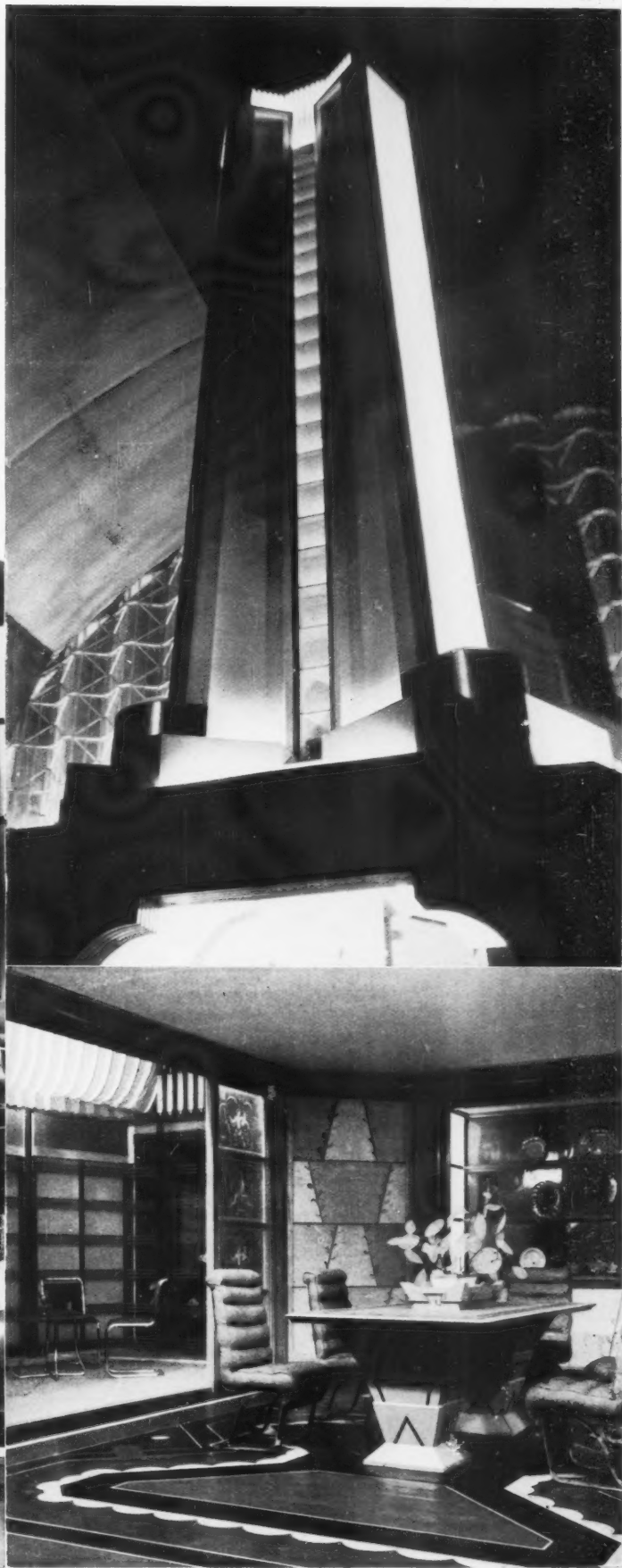
Photographs by F. R. Yerbury, Esq.

(1) *THE TOWER OF LIGHT*, illuminated by indirect colour lighting, stands above the main staircase, the approach to which is seen in the lower part of the photograph. An impressive background is formed by the semicircular metal window. Architect, Douglas Tanner. Craftsmen (lighting): Venreco.

ARCHITECTS' ROOMS.—(2) *LOOKING FROM THE DINING-ROOM TOWARDS THE COVERED TERRACE*, designed by Lionel Bucknell. The etched glass panels on the left were designed by Mrs. Grey Wornum. Architect for the dining-room, G. Grey Wornum. The wall panelling in the dining-room is Venesta birch plywood, decorated with painted ornament by Miriam Wornum. All the joinery work, including the table, was executed by J. P. White. The etched glass was made by Pilkington Brothers. The sideboard recess is lined with Textamur, made by F. A. Hughes. The Wedgwood dinner service was designed by L. M. Bucknell and Ruth Ellis. The glass is by James Powell and Sons, and was designed by Keith Murray and F. A. Hogan.

(3) *THE SITTING-ROOM*. The walls are lined with a veneer of white mahogany and the floor is covered with plywood in large squares. Architect, A. B. Knapp Fisher. Designers and craftsmen: Panelling by Drytone; curtains designed by Bernard Adeney and made by Allan Walton; rugs designed by E. McKnight Kauffer; electric fire by Ferranti; electric light fittings designed by A. B. Read and made by Troughton and Young; furniture by Gordon Russell, Arundel Clark, The Chiswick Guild, Betty Joel, E. Mendham and H. S. Goodhart-Rendel; glass and pottery by James Powell and Sons. The inlaid panel was designed by Frank Brangwyn and made by Rowley.

(4) *THE DINING-ROOM* from another angle. Plywood in trapezium-shaped panels forms the wall covering. There is a striking contrast between the two types of steel chair.



material, handled very ably by Mr. Wornum, who has contrived a pattern in grey, white, black, and tan. The same material is used for the table top. The sideboard recess is lined with plain Textamur, a fabric stiffened and glazed by a special treatment with resin, the transparent qualities of which are illustrated by a system of concealed lighting at the sides of the recess.

The garden terrace is intended to show the possibilities presented by the ordinary, and, as a rule, unsightly "backyard"; Mr. Bucknell has converted this into a particularly attractive adjunct to the dining-room. Painted treillage forms the surround, and the space is roofed by a velarium supported on slender red poles. The floor is paved with cream-coloured Biancola, laid to form a geometric pattern, which is relieved by the introduction of slabs in a deeper shade. The central feature, axial with the dining-room, is a fountain of dull silver-grey glass with a base of viridian-green Lap.

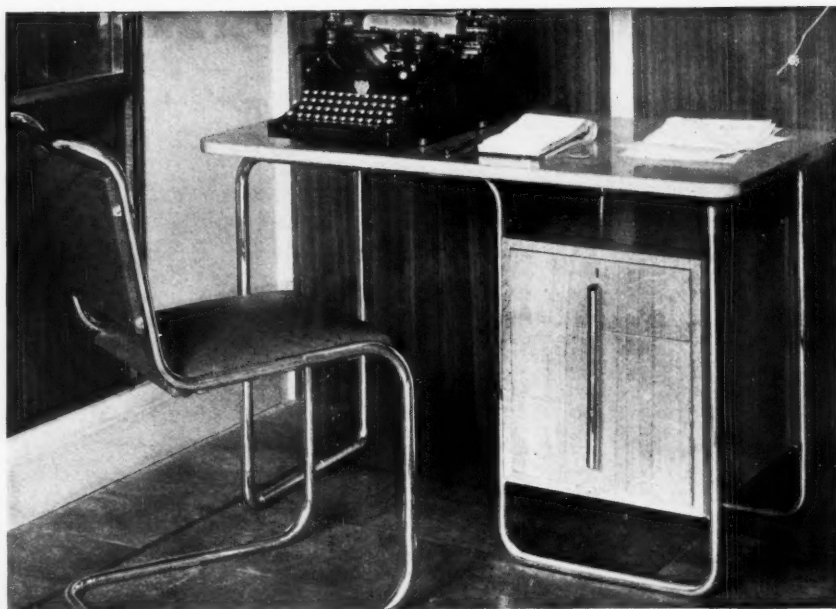
On the blank sides of the "stand" is a selection of photographs from the recent A.A. exhibition at the R.I.B.A.

FURNITURE

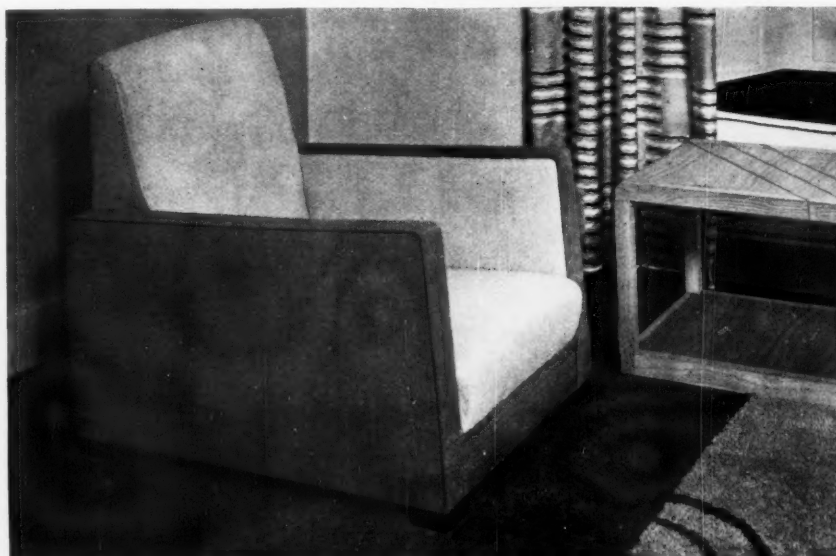
Having witnessed the collapse of a steel chair, of very obscure origin, under a prominent figure in the architectural profession, I hastened to ascertain, from manufacturers of tubular furniture, whether such is the general behaviour of metal chairs. Most emphatically "no"; the parts, in steel furniture of quality, are not bent, hollow, round a wooden former, but a core of pitch in the tube prevents any tendency in the metal to flatten at the bends, and whilst the tube retains its perfectly circular section it is impossible to distort it under any other than very abnormal conditions. For the ordinary metal chairs a low carbon steel is used, but the cantilevered seat type, which depend for their stability on the springy nature of the metal, are made from chromemolybdenum steel.

The strength, cleanliness, lightness and mobility of steel furniture are, I am informed, rapidly increasing its popularity in this country, and manufacturers are working day and night shifts to meet the demand. In my opinion the prices are still high, but I am told that impending mass-production will greatly reduce the cost. Plating is at present an expensive item; for instance, a chair made by Messrs. Cox & Company, and shown on the Easiwork stand, costs £5 5s. in chromium plate against £3 10s. in enamel.

On the same stand is a steel table designed by Raymond McGrath and made by Messrs. Cox & Company. The table-top is of black Bakelite which forms the surface ply of a 1 in. laminated board, and is used here in its best form, in a plain colour, and not as imitation marble or fancy wood. Its immunity from damage by scratching, burning, hot liquids and spirits should give it wide scope for work of this nature. It is obtainable, as a face to laminated board, in sheets 40 in. by 34 in.,



An OFFICE DESK in oak and chromium-plated steel designed by Oliver Bernard and made by Pel.



An ARMCHAIR covered with two shades of linen canvas, designed and made by Gordon Russell.

and is used in this form as a wall covering for the stand. The square black slabs are held to the walls by circular studs faced with the same material.

Messrs. Pel have a comprehensive range of both home and office furniture made of tubular steel framing, upholstered or combined with wood (illustrated above). It is noticeable, in spite of the excellence of the patterned fabrics employed in several cases, that on the whole a single colour and a more even textured material is preferable in the coverings of steel furniture.

The furniture generally shows an upward trend, but many of the exhibits are a trifle showy and vulgar: too much French polish. There are numerous instances of brilliant notions misapplied, and of pieces that are near to being good, but which fail in their lack of restraint.

They try so hard to look precious, but the attempt merely makes them appear cheap.

Among the better shows is the furniture of Messrs. Gordon Russell, whose stand is, I think, the best arranged in the exhibition. There is no expression of "glut" here, and the charming simplicity of the furniture is reflected in the surround. A wallpaper with white spots on a pale greenish-grey ground makes a perfect background for the pieces exhibited. Prominent among these are a really comfortable armchair, and a set of wood dining-room chairs, lightly upholstered.

Messrs. Gooch have an attractive range of bedroom equipment in untreated oak.

Messrs. Sanderson and Sons' stand is designed to demonstrate the development of the *appliqué* system of wallpaper decoration, for which I can claim little enthusiasm, but Mr. Masters was very